

DRHC Disciplinary Code

Scope and general background

The DRHC Disciplinary Code covers a number of different areas of the management and operation of the club:

- Playing and related matters;
- Conformance with EH policies including those in respect of the Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey and Ethics & Behaviours ('Respect');
- The general management of the club including the work undertaken by coaches, team managers, and volunteers;
- The general behaviour of members on club premises and also whilst visiting other hockey venues and clubs, including as spectators.

The club has issued an integrated Code of Conduct document which covers the club's expectations in relation to all aspects of the club's operations: playing; coaching, managing and volunteering; and spectating including the role of parents in support of their children. This document is also displayed on the club notice board. It is the responsibility of the Exec to keep this policy up-to-date and in line with best practice.

Where EH policies are in place and where these include incident reporting & investigation procedures then the club will follow these including any recommended routes for escalation if the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily within the club's own Disciplinary Process.

In general DRHC expects satisfactory standards of behaviour and conduct from all members and those directly linked to members. The disciplinary process provides a framework for dealing with instances where those cited are alleged not to have met the required standards. Should a member be convicted of a criminal offence in relation to matters outside of DRHC membership, this will not normally in itself be considered a reason for disciplinary action but it may do so depending upon the circumstances of the conviction and the member's suitability to continue membership.

The disciplinary process

Section 17, paragraphs 17.2, 17.3 and 17.5, of the DRHC Constitution and Rules sets out the general provisions with regard to: the requirement that members abide by the club Code of Conduct; the adoption of policies, rules and mandatory procedures of EH; and the role of the Hon. Secretary and the Executive with regard to the investigation of complaints.

Paragraph 17.5 states that 'Complaints relating to the management of the club or the conduct of any member shall be addressed in writing to the Executive Committee, sent via the Hon. Secretary, who will investigate the matter and notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation'. The normal process for such investigations will be as follows:

If a complaint is raised orally the complainant should be advised of the requirement to submit their complaint in writing via the Hon. Secretary.

The complaint should preferably be in typed format, be a chronological account of the alleged events, and should clearly state how the alleged behaviour has affected them and whether they wish their complaint to be dealt with as a formal disciplinary matter.

Upon receiving the complaint the Hon. Secretary shall satisfy themselves as to whether the complainant wishes their complaint to be dealt with as a formal disciplinary matter or by informal resolution (such as by apology) by contacting them as soon as reasonably possible and asking them to confirm the position in writing as soon as possible if the complaint does not already address that issue.

If the complainant wishes the matter to be resolved informally, the Hon. Secretary shall contact the member in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, that the complainant is content to have the matter resolved informally and whether the member is willing to deal with the matter in that way. If the member is so willing the Hon. Secretary shall appoint a member of the club of standing who is unconnected with the complaint to act as mediator to resolve the matter informally and confidentially. Should such efforts fail the matter may be referred back to the Hon. Secretary to progress the matter formally.

Should the complainant wish to have the matter resolved formally or should informal resolution fail then the following process steps will be instituted and be carried out by the Hon. Secretary:

1. Investigation and establishment of facts by Hon. Secretary;
2. Establishment of an ad-hoc 3 member disciplinary committee;
3. Hearing by the Disciplinary Committee of the information gleaned by the investigation and the conclusion of the Hon. Secretary;
4. Decision of the Disciplinary Committee;
5. Appeals protocol.

A separate paper is available via the Hon. Secretary or the Chairman which sets out the details of these process steps including roles, responsibilities, and expected timetable. The Hon. Secretary can co-opt help as he or she sees fit.

If at any time during the disciplinary process the Hon. Secretary and/or the Disciplinary Committee decide that it is necessary to refer the matter to the police or seek the advice or guidance of, or refer the matter to, the Child Protection Officer then the club process will be suspended in the interim.

Specific requirements in respect of playing

DRHC expects its members to play the game of hockey fully within the laws and also within the spirit of the game. This section sets out what is expected and confirms that disciplinary steps will be taken against any member not complying with the code.

- All members shall at all times when representing the Club play in accordance with the Rules of Hockey and within the Codes of Conduct issued by England Hockey and Cheshire Hockey Association.

- It is the responsibility of team captains to give prompt notice to the Selection Committee of any yellow or red cards issued to a player in their team.
- Where any player has been given four yellow cards in a season it will be the responsibility of the Selection Committee to interview the player concerned, the relevant captain, and to review the player's overall conduct and the circumstances surrounding the award of each card. The Committee will be entitled to take such steps in relation to the player as they consider appropriate, primarily in the interests of the Club, but also of the player.
- Players are reminded that the authority of the Umpire is absolute during the game, and that the Club expects all of its members to accept and comply with any decisions given by the Umpire without dissent, both at the time of the incident and afterwards, whether on the pitch or elsewhere.
- This requirement extends to all members of the Club at all levels, and is equally as important when they are spectating at a game. The Club will take strong steps in relation to any Club member whose behaviour off the pitch at any time infringes its Code of Conduct, or who behaves in such a way as not to support the Code.

Disciplinary Policy and 'Safeguarding of Young People in Hockey' (Safeguarding) Procedures

Safeguarding Procedures closely mirror the Disciplinary Code and including the procedures outlined above if the complaint is to be dealt with internally.

At any time the Welfare Officer can refer to outside agencies such as the Police or Local Authority, as he or she deems appropriate, and if complaints are to be dealt with externally then EH reporting procedures apply.

These can be found on the EH website and are also referred to in the club's own internal Safeguarding documentation.