



BC SOCCER

**FIFA LAWS OF THE GAME/ FIELD OF PLAY
VIOLATIONS DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINT
PROCEDURES**

June 2024

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Determining Admissibility

1. When a matter meets the criteria and jurisdiction of a FIFA Laws of the Game / Field of Play Violation, the ITP Officer will refer the complaint to the Independent Discipline Chair (IDC) for review.
2. To submit the matter to the IDC, the complaint must include the referee report, if applicable, and all available witness information or evidence from the complainant.
3. Once the complaint is accepted by the IDC, the ITP Officer or IDC, will provide the complaint to the respondent and ask them to submit their response to the allegation(s) within 72 hours.
4. In some cases, this deadline may be extended based on the decision of the ITP Officer or IDC. This decision may not be appealed.

Responsibilities of the Independent Discipline Chair

5. On receipt of a complaint, the IDC for a FIFA Laws of the Game / Field of Play Violation has the following responsibilities:
 - a. Determine if the matter should be escalated to a Maltreatment or Major Infraction violation and be addressed under its procedure.
 - b. Determine if the case is frivolous and is to be dismissed.
 - c. Determine if the case should be referred to the league and/or district and addressed under its procedure.
 - d. Determine if the case will proceed via a documentary hearing or oral hearing. Hearings are a part of the complaint resolution process and individuals attending a hearing are not necessarily deemed to have committed misconduct. At a hearing, the panel will determine what, if any, violations of the BC Soccer policy have occurred, and if so, what sanctions are to be applied, if any.
 - i. For cases requiring an oral hearing, the ITP and IDC will constitute a panel, made up of a minimum of one and maximum of three members.
 - ii. For cases requiring an oral hearing, the IDC will be the Chair of a Panel or appoint a designated Chair for each constituted panel, where applicable

FIFA Laws of the Game/Field of play Violation- Documentary Hearing

6. For cases proceeding via a documentary hearing, the hearing shall be set in accordance with the following procedure:
 - a. The IDC will review all submissions as collected within the triage process.
 - i. Should any party require additional time to submit information, they may request an extension from the IDC.
 - ii. In some cases, an extension may be granted based on the decision of the IDC. This decision may not be appealed.

- iii. The IDC will review all submissions and make a decision on the complaint, and issue any appropriate sanction.
- iv. The decision will be communicated to all parties and the relevant Member Organizations as determined by the IDC.

FIFA Laws of the Game/Field of play Violation- Oral Hearing

7. Hearings are a part of the complaint resolution process and individuals attending a hearing are not necessarily deemed to have committed misconduct. At a hearing, the panel will determine what, if any, violations of the BC Soccer policy have occurred, and if so, what sanctions are to be applied, if any.
8. The IDC or the accused may request a complainant or author of a misconduct report to attend a hearing. The requested party may decline to attend.
9. If the IDC determines that a hearing is required, the hearing shall be set in accordance with the following procedure:
 - a. Notice shall be given to all parties at least ten (10) business days prior to the scheduled hearing.
 - i. By mutual consent and in writing, the parties may modify these timelines.
 - b. At onset of the hearing, The Panel Chair shall read the complaint and clearly state the charge.
 - c. The parties may call witnesses to the incident to submit written information or to appear at the hearing.
 - i. The party calling the witness is responsible for expenses when the witness is required to appear at the hearing. The following actions are required by the Panel Chair; however, the sequence may be adjusted.
 - d. The author of the complaint or report, if present, must be given an opportunity to comment on or to add any qualifications to the complaint.
 - e. The accused must be allowed to ask relevant questions and to make submissions and statements on their own behalf. All questions must be directed to the Panel.
 - f. Panel members may question the complainant and the accused, and any witnesses invited to participate by either the complainant or the accused.
 - g. The complainant and the accused will be invited to make summary statements before withdrawing.
 - h. An Association Official/Representative may accompany an accused person; however, if the individual is less than 19 years of age, they must be accompanied by their parent/guardian.
 - i. An Observer may accompany an accused person but may not actively participate in the hearing; the Observer may not act as a witness at such hearing or in a legal capacity.
 - j. The Panel has the ability to deny any individual entrance to the hearing as an Observer if they determine that the individual does not meet the definition or purpose of an Observer as defined by BC Soccer. Requests to have an Observer

- should be received by the ITP Officer at least two (2) business days prior to a hearing and identify the Observer and the relationship.
- k. The offending party or their Representative must be present. If the offended party does not appear, the hearing will not proceed, the party will be fined and the party will be suspended from all soccer related activities until the party requests in writing and attends a hearing.
 - l. Persons and organizations charged with an offence must have the opportunity to respond to the charges either:
 - i. In person for in person hearings
 - ii. Telecommunication / Video-conference during the hearing
 - iii. In writing (permission may be granted if the individual is unable to appear for valid reason as determined by the panel and has made a written request for such consideration).
 - m. All parties will be given a written record of the panel's decision or advised that further consideration is required, and a decision letter will be provided to them at a later date within the guidelines outlined.
 - n. The decision will be communicated to all parties and the relevant Member Organizations as determined by the IDC.

FIFA Laws of the Game/Field of Play Violation- Decision and Sanctions

- 10. Upon receiving the response and reviewing all evidence and information available, the Independent Discipline Chair or designate will determine one or more of the following:
 - a. The matter will be dismissed due to lack of evidence of a breach.
 - b. The appropriate sanctions to be taken against a Respondent.
- 11. All sanctions for Field of Play Violation complaints will be decided by the Independent Discipline Chair or the Disciplinary Panel where needed in accordance with the "Sanctioning Tables" outlined on Appendix B in the Discipline, Complaint and Appeals Policy.
- 12. The panel shall consider the evidence presented and decide the case such that the timeline is met.
- 13. For match-related infractions, where the expected outcome is 5 Matches or less, decision will be provided within three (3) business days of the completion of the hearing.
- 14. For all other infractions, final decision will be provided no later than 30 days following the hearing
- 15. A notable exception to this rule is where there is legal or police involvement.
- 16. Extensions to the above timelines can be granted by the appropriated Judicial Body of BC Soccer.
- 17. A Discipline Panel has the right to call a new hearing and re-hear any case if new evidence is brought forward at a later date.

18. Failure of the accused, without due cause, to attend or remain at a discipline hearing will be dealt with as follows:
 - a. An accused individual who refuses to attend, waives their right to participate, fails to attend, fails to respond to a hearing notification within 10 business days, or who walks out of a disciplined hearing, thus preventing a Panel from rendering a decision on the case, will stand suspension until such time they make a written request for another hearing and appear at a scheduled subsequent hearing.
 - b. If a Panel determines that it has obtained sufficient evidence to make a sound and supportable decision it may instead render its decision.
 - c. The Panel may at its discretion charge a re-hearing fee of up to \$1000 + GST.
 - d. The appropriate Judicial Body of BC Soccer may at its discretion fine an individual up to \$500 should the individual fail to attend a discipline hearing.
 - e. If that individual is a Youth, the Panel may fine the organization for which the Youth is registered.

Costs

19. At the discretion of the Judicial Body, associated costs may be required to be paid by the unsuccessful party.
20. If there is no unsuccessful party, costs are borne by the Association hearing the case.
21. If considered fair to do so, costs may be split among several parties.
22. The Chair of the Judicial Panel may, in exceptional circumstances, decide to curtail or dispense with costs and expenses, including the Appeal's Fee.
23. No procedural compensation care awarded in proceedings of a Judicial Body.
24. Any cost incurred by applications for leave to appeal that are deemed baseless by the Appeal Chair of BC Soccer must be paid by the appellant.

Changes to the Discipline Panel or Postponement

25. All parties must provide consent to proceed with a hearing if any change to the number of Panel Members is made after the notice of hearing is issued.
26. Any accused person or organization required to attend a hearing may request one postponement for a scheduled or published hearing.
 - a. A request to postpone will be granted if the request is received no later than five (5) business days prior to the hearing date. Requests to postpone within five (5) Business Days will be considered but may not be granted.
 - b. An individual who requests to reschedule their hearing more than once may be suspended until such time that they attend a hearing at the discretion of the appointed Panel.
 - c. An accused party making submission to postpone a hearing is required to serve any required automatic match suspension and will remain suspended until the appointed Panel hears the case.

- d. If a Discipline Panel is not able to reschedule the hearing within the required fifteen (15) business days, the accused shall be eligible to participate in soccer activities provided the required automatic suspension has been served.
 - i. If there is a fee to request a postponement and the request is denied, the fee shall be refunded.
 - ii. Should the hearing be postponed by the Panel and the accused was prepared to appear, the hearing must be rescheduled, and the following terms shall be met:
 - 1. The accused party shall not be assessed a postponement fee.
 - 2. The accused party shall be eligible to participate in soccer activities once the required automatic match suspension has been served, with the exception, of any individual served with a provisional suspension by the ITP.