



Complaints and Grievances Policy

1. Introduction

Purpose of a Complaints Procedure

At Le Page Park Cricket Club (LPPCC) we are committed to providing a pleasant and safe environment for all children, members and visitors. We acknowledge, however, that children, members, parents and visitors can sometimes feel aggrieved about something that is happening at LPPCC which appears to be discriminatory, or to constitute unreasonable behaviour that in cases breaches the clubs various Codes of Behaviour.

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to our zone management committee. If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority in accordance with the following:

- Cricket Australia (CA) Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People;
- LPPCC Member Protection Policy.

A member, child, visitor or parent may make a complaint about any decision, behaviour, act or omission that she or he feels is discriminatory or constitutes a breach of the clubs various Codes of Behaviour or is unreasonable. Raising the complaint directly with the person perceived as causing the grievance may sometimes address the concerns of the aggrieved person. However, that is not always possible. Sometimes several attempts at face-to-face resolution have been attempted or have occurred with little success. Whilst most concerns can be addressed through direct discussion by the parties, there will be instances where raising the concern with the other person on a face-to-face basis is not appropriate or possible.

Examples of complaints covered by this procedure include:

- concerns about child disciplinary procedures;
- behaviour of a coach;
- behaviour of a manager;
- behaviour of other volunteers;
- behaviour of players;
- behaviour of members;
- behaviour of parents;

- damage or loss of personal property;
- bullying and harassment.

Examples of complaints NOT covered by this procedure include:

- Child protection issues – these issues including complaint processes are dealt with in the CA Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People which has been adopted by LPPCC and the supporting LPPCC Member Protection Policy.
- Occupational health and safety issues.

These issues are also referred to below in Section 4 – Other Related Policies.

2. Making a complaint

Some complaints, because of the seriousness of their nature, should be referred immediately to the President or Complaints Manager – e.g. complaints about behaviour which places others at risk of serious harm.

Step 1 - Before making a formal complaint.

In many circumstances, the most appropriate step to take first is to tell the person who is the cause of the complaint how you feel. If the complaint is about their behaviour, tell them that it is offensive or hurtful or not acceptable. If the complaint is about another member and their behaviour, tell them why you think it is discriminatory or not acceptable. Telling the person will give them a chance to stop or change what they are doing or explain their actions and why.

Step 2 - Before making a formal complaint.

If the problem or concern is unable to be resolved by a direct personal approach, it should normally be raised with an appropriate person in order to discuss the issue and seek resolution:

- For a parent with a complaint about a player or another member of the club, the concern should first be discussed with the relevant coach .
- For a member with a complaint about a player or member in their team, the concern should first be raised with the relevant coach .
- For a parent, player, other member or visitor with a complaint about an Executive Committee member, the concern should be raised with the Complaints Manager . The Complaints Manager will negotiate with the complainant an agreed process within a set time frame and try to resolve the complaint.

3. Making a formal complaint

The initial formal complaint must be introduced to the Complaints Manager or President ‘in writing’. In this instance, ‘in writing’ means a formal:

- letter signed by the complainant sent via post or personally handed to the complaints manager or President or a member of the Executive Committee due to the unavailability of both the complaints manager and the President, or
- email for the attention of the complaints manager , President or member of the Executive Committee sent to the following email address: lepageparkcc@gmail.com attaching a letter signed by the complainant. For the avoidance of doubt, ‘in writing does not include text message or an email not including a signed letter. The initial formal complaint must be made within 14 days of the matter the subject of the complaint occurring in order to ensure that the:
 - matter is dealt with in a timely manner; and
 - any information provided during interviews and any other evidence remains current.

For the avoidance of doubt, any complaints not raised within the 14-day timeframe or which are made anonymously will not be considered by the complaints manager, President or Management Committee.

If the process mentioned above of raising the concern, obtaining the facts and seeking a resolution is not producing a satisfactory outcome, the following procedure may be used. The purpose of this procedure is to offer a process by which a player, other member, parent or visitor may have a complaint addressed. For example, if you feel that you are being harassed or discriminated against, this complaint handling procedure is available to you so your concerns can be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Who may use this procedure?

- Any player within the club;
- Any other members of the club;
- Any parents;
- Any volunteers;
- Any visitor to the club from the wider community.

4. Other related policies

Other documents, which should be read in conjunction with this policy, include:

- LPPCC Rules of Association (RoA) – sub-rule 10(4) and Rules 10 and 11 of the RoA deal with termination of membership and the associated appeal process;
- CA Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People - Clause 8 of this policy deals with complaints in relation to member protection (primarily child protection);
- LPPCC Member Protection Policy – Clause 10 of this policy deals with complaints in relation to member protection (primarily child protection);
- LPPCC Player Code of Behaviour;
- LPPCC Coach/Manager Code of Behaviour;
- LPPCC Parent Code of Behaviour.

5. Key elements of the complaints handling procedure

Impartiality

If you make a complaint, it will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner. No judgments or assumptions will be made, and no action will be taken until the investigation is complete. If a complaint is made against you, your rights will be protected, and you will be given an opportunity to tell your side of the story.

Confidentiality

You should feel secure that, if you do make a complaint under this procedure, it will remain confidential. The only people who will have access to information about the complaint will be:

- the person making the complaint
- the person about whom the complaint is made
- the person to whom the complaint is made
- the person investigating the complaint
- required Executive Committee personnel.

No victimisation

Provided your complaint is made in good faith, you should rest assured that you will not suffer in any way as a consequence. The President and COMPLAINTS MANAGER of the club will ensure that a person who makes a complaint is not victimised in any way.

Vexatious or malicious complaints

There is an underlying assumption that complaints are made in good faith (and with good will) and with an intention for resolution as opposed to retribution.

Timeliness

Each complaint will be finalised within as short a period of time as is practicable. Complainants will be advised if the matter cannot be finalised within one (1) month.

6. What to do if you have a complaint

Go to the complaints manager or President. If you feel you cannot approach the person directly or you are not happy with her or his initial response or reaction, then you may go and explain the problem to the complaints manager, President or another member of the Management Committee. They have been trained to be the first point of contact for people with complaints. The names of the club designated persons are listed at the end of this procedure. The person will advise you about what your options are and what will happen if you make a formal complaint. If the complaint is against an Executive Committee person and the complainant has been unable to resolve the matter in an informal way, he or she should seek redress with the club's Executive Committee as a whole. This is achieved by presenting a written description as to why you want the procedure to be taken through the Management Committee.

7. What happens next?

7.1 Once you have made the complaint to the complaints manager or President, that person will consider whether there are any reasons why he or she should not proceed to deal with the complaint. For example, the person you complained about may be a personal friend of the complaints manager or a Executive Committee member.

7.2 If there is a good reason why it is inappropriate for the designated person to deal with your complaint, the complaint will, with your consent, be referred to another appropriate person.

7.3 Once a delegated person has decided to proceed, that designated person will:

- (a) Take a written record of the complaint.
- (b) Acknowledge the complaint with a letter/email stating that the matter proceeds to the investigation stage.
- (c) Immediately appoint two (2) independent Executive Committee members to investigate.
- (d) The two appointed Executive Committee members will compile list of likely interviewees and compile list of questions for the interviews.
- (e) Interview you or arrange for another appropriate person to interview you and during this interview:
 - the process will be explained to you;
 - you will be advised what will happen if the complaint is upheld;
 - you will be advised what will happen if the complaint is not supported by the evidence; and

- you will be told where you can go for assistance, if you are not happy with the way the complaint is dealt with.

(f) Interview the accused person or arrange for another appropriate person to interview the accused person to hear his or her side of the story:

- the process will be explained to the accused person;
- the accused person will be advised what will happen if the complaint is upheld;
- the accused person will be advised what will happen if the complaint is not supported by the evidence; and
- the accused person will be told where they can go for assistance, if they are not happy with the way the complaint is dealt with.

(g) Interview the relevant Coach (if required)

(h) Arrange interviews with other relevant witnesses as needed i.e. players and parents.

(i) Document results of interviews.

(j) Gather other independent evidence (if possible).

(k) Arrange an Executive Committee meeting to discuss the complaint and the results of interviews and any other independent evidence.

(l) Facilitate an appropriate decision by the Executive Committee in relation to the complaint (i.e. uphold complaint or otherwise).

(m) Document the basis of the decision by a majority of the Executive Committee.

(n) Arrange a meeting with you tell you what the accused and witnesses have said and to discuss the decision of the Executive Committee and what action will be taken.

(o) Arrange a meeting with the accused person to tell them what witnesses have said and to discuss the decision of the Executive Committee and what action will be taken.

These interviews will be conducted separately and impartially. Written reports about the complaint may be requested. The importance of confidentiality will be stressed to all parties and they will be warned of the consequences if there is a breach of confidentiality (e.g. possible suspension from the club).

7.4 You should tell the designated person what action you would like taken, e.g. a written apology from the person, a written warning, etc. This allows the designated person to understand, from your perspective, what you believe you need from the process. It will not dictate the remedy that might ultimately apply.

8. Possible outcomes

If the complaint is upheld, or sustained, the following are possible outcomes depending on the nature of the complaint:

- a mediated agreement between the parties;
- a verbal apology;
- a written apology;
- suspension or termination of membership;
- any other action as deemed appropriate by the Management Committee.

If a complaint is not upheld, or sustained, (e.g. there is insufficient evidence) but some issues come out of the investigation that are required to be addressed then, possible outcomes include:

- relevant information for those involved;
- monitoring of behaviour;
- mediation at the local level; or
- any combination of the above.

If the complaint is found to be without any basis or if there is evidence that the complaint was made with the main purpose or intent of causing distress to the accused, the following possible outcomes need to be considered and, where appropriate, implemented:

- a written apology from the person who made the complaint;
- an official warning;
- possible suspension from the club if deemed appropriate by the Management Committee;
- possible termination of club membership if deemed appropriate by the Management Committee.

The designated person is primarily responsible for implementing whatever outcome is determined. The designated person or the President (unless they are the object of the complaint or grievance) will also review the effectiveness of the outcome from time to time.

9. Appeals

There are two avenues of appeal if you feel that the complaints procedure has not been followed properly or that the outcome is unacceptable to you.

At Club level

The complainant or accused may appeal to the complaints manager or President. If either of the above has been involved in investigating or examining the complaint or is the person named as the source of the grievance, there is no right of appeal.

The appeal will consider the way the complaint was managed and examine the outcome – no further action will be taken unless the complaints manager or President believes that the:

- complaint was managed improperly; or
- outcome was inappropriate.

If the complaints manager or President will arrange for the complaint to be reviewed if he or she believes that the:

- complaint was not managed properly; or
- outcome was inappropriate.

To an external organisation

If you are not happy with the way your complaint has been dealt with by LPPCC, you may wish to apply to an external agency for further advice and assistance. You may take your complaint to the external agency at any stage in the procedure, if you are not satisfied with how your complaint is being dealt with. The agencies that would most likely have authority are:

- SECA
- Cricket Victoria.

10. Record keeping

Records of complaints, interviews and other documentation relating to a complaint must be kept at LPPCC in a separate complaints file. The complaints manager will hold this file for the tenure of their appointment.

11. Designated persons

The following people are designated persons who you speak to if you decide to make a formal complaint:

- The designated person for Parents, Coaches and Manager will be:
 - o complaints manager ; or
 - o the President.
- The designated person for players will be:
 - o complaints manager ; or
 - o any Executive Committee member.
- The designated person for Executive Committee members will be:
 - o complaints manager ; or
 - o The President
 - o any other independent Executive Committee member.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant to club operations and reflects both community expectations and legal requirements.

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Le Page Park Cricket Club Executive Committee in September 2024

REVIEW DATE: September 2025