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Policy Document

Policy: **Complaints Policy & Procedure**

Version: 1.01

Responsible Officer: MPIO Board Sponsor

Date Revised: 20th December 2025

Date Approved: 19th January 2026

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure that grievances, disputes or complaints can be raised in an appropriate way and ensure they are dealt with fairly, promptly and efficiently.

The following document should be read in conjunction with the following policies

- Tuggeranong United Football Club (The Club) Code of Conduct
- Football Australia Code of Conduct & Spectator Code of Conduct
- Football Australia Member Protection Framework: Safeguarding Policy

It is acknowledged that people associated with The Club will from time to time have grievances or complaints that need to be resolved. The Club abides by the following principles:

- People have the right to have their grievances heard and considered through an established process in a timely, fair and respectful way.
- All complaints are taken seriously.
- A person will not be disadvantaged in anyway as a direct result of making a complaint.
- The respondent (the person / people who the complaint is about) will be provided with an opportunity to tell their story (procedural fairness).
- Where a formal complaint is received, it will be considered in a timely and discrete manner, with the complaint and its resolution documented.



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Our Mission

To strengthen every player, coach, volunteer, and supporter by working together as one club – providing the resources, support, and opportunities to achieve our best on and off the field, no matter where people are in their journey in football or life.

There are a number of options outlined in this policy for raising and managing complaints. The Club have dedicated people to support you on how best to handle your issue.

Member Protection Information Officers

The Club has appointed dedicated Member Information Protection Officers (MPIO) who are responsible for providing information about a person's rights, responsibilities and options to make a complaint or raise a concern under relevant code of conduct and member protection policies.

The MPIO can offer advice on how to go about making a complaint. The MPIO will listen to issues raised by members before triaging and referring them to the right place to find a resolution. The MPIO will keep all matters confidential unless it is requested otherwise. The MPIO does not advocate or investigate complaints on behalf of the complainant.

To get in contact with an MPIO email them on mpio@tufc.org.au

Complaint Officers

The Club has dedicated Complaints Officers whose responsibility is to liaise with complainants, respondents and appropriate Club officials to manage the complaint and reach an equitable solution for all parties involved. The Complaints Officer will assist in the mediation of the issue with the assistance of a Technical Director and/or Coordinator of the relevant age/group if appropriate.

The Complaints Officer can escalate a concern to the Board if considered necessary.

A complaint can be made by sending an email to the complaints officer at XXXX@tufc.org.au



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Complaints Process

There are 3 separate options for handling your complaint. The Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) will be able to provide detailed information on the processes available.

Note. State/Territory laws state that designated individuals must report allegations or suspected incidents of child abuse.

Self Management

The person with the complaint tries to resolve the problem directly with the person who has upset them if it is safe to do so. Self-management of complaints can quickly resolve many lower-level issues and misunderstandings.

Informal Process

This option involves the complaint being raised in an informal way with a person in a position of authority within the club, such as a Complaints Officer, Board Member, Coach, Coordinator or other official, who may assist with managing the issue by:

- Observing the behaviour of the person complained about to assess the need for further action;
- Conducting informal mediation between the parties;
- Educating the respondent on their roles and responsibilities under TUFC and FFA's code of conduct, member protection and child safeguarding policies;
- Working with other volunteers to remedy the situation.

Examples of less serious issues that can be dealt with using informal processes include:

- favouritism in player positions;
- insufficient rotation of player positions;
- excessive emphasis on winning or goals;
- low level disrespectful comments, inappropriate jokes, aggressive tone of voice, swearing (including through social media or online chat forums).



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Formal Process

If the complaint has not been resolved, or the complaint is regarding a more serious issue, the complainant may decide to write a formal complaint.

A formal procedure is most appropriate when:

- matters have not been satisfactorily resolved at the informal level;
- matters involve serious allegations;
- the other person denies the allegations;
- repeated pattern of behaviour or entrenched behaviour;
- the person or people being complained about are more senior than the person with the complaint.

Examples of serious issues that should be dealt with using formal processes include:

- Bullying (e.g. intimidation, hazing, cyber bullying, ostracising behaviour by an individual or group);
- Sexual harassment;
- Racial harassment and vilification;
- Homophobia;
- Extreme inappropriate coaching/ spectator behaviour (e.g. profanities accompanying aggressive/threatening gestures).

A formal complaint involves an investigation of the complaint and then recommendations about outcomes, which may lead to disciplinary action.

The steps for raising and managing complaints are outlined below.



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Step 1: Lodge Complaint

Formal complaints should be submitted by email to the Complaints Officer at XXXXX@tufc.org.au and are aimed to be resolved within 14 days, however complex and formal investigations may take longer.

To enable fair and efficient consideration of the complaint, as much relevant information as possible should be provided to the Complaints Officer. Information should be specific, rather than general and should contain what action or outcome the complainant would like to see as a result of the complaint.

The Complaints Officer will document the complaint on the TUFC Complaints register. The Complaints Officer needs to make the Board aware that a formal complaint has been received (De-identified where possible) and the actions that will be taken to resolve the issue identified. The Board can add input and escalate the issue if considered appropriate.

Step 2: Investigate Complaint

All investigations will be carried out as discretely and privately as possible, however the Complaints Officer may need to discuss aspects of the complaint with relevant TUFC officials such as Technical Directors, coaches, program coordinators and/or Board members.

Any information that is shared will be limited to only what is necessary for the purpose of handling the complaint and where possible will be de-identified.

The Complaints Officer will raise the issue with the respondent and provide an opportunity for them to respond.

The Complaints Officer may request further information such as witness statements, letters or other documents to assist with their investigation.



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Step 3: resolve Complaint

Include formal close off of the matter in writing and advise of outcome. Note that privacy will be protected of both complainant and person complained about, so may not see complete details.

If it is found that they subject of the complaint has acted wrongfully or made a mistake, the outcome of the complaint may warrant the imposition of disciplinary measures (Sanctions). Sanctions will be applied in a fair and reasonable way. The authority to issues sanctions is limited to President, Vice-President and Secretary.

Sanctions will be considered in the following circumstances

- Breach of TUFC or FFA Codes of Conduct
- Breach of FFA Member Protection Framework
- The actions contradict reasonable instructions given by an official or other authority figures
- Actions are deemed detrimental to a positive culture (eg brings the sport into disrepute)

Sanctions imposed may consist of one or more of the following:

- Direction that the individual make a verbal or written apology
- A warning issued with consequences outlined if a reoffence occurs
- Direction to attend counselling or complete a specified training course
- A suspension from activities (such as matches, training or other events)
- Termination of appointment or membership
- Fines



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Step 4: Appeals Process

If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the process or outcome of the investigation, or any recommended mediation does not result in a mutually acceptable solution, then either party is entitled to appeal. In an appeals process, the appeal must be submitted in writing to the Board outlining the issues identified with the resolution offered. The appeal will be reheard within 7 days of the written appeal being received. The complainant/respondent will be advised of the outcome of the appeal in writing. A person has the right to one internal appeal.

Step 5: External Reporting Options

If the internal complaint resolution procedure does not achieve a satisfactory resolution or outcome, or if the person with the complaint believes it would be impossible to get an impartial resolution, they may approach an external body such as:

- Capital Football

Complaints relating to alleged Prohibited Conduct under the Child Safeguarding Policy or discrimination based on a Protected Characteristics, including race, sex, age, disability or religion can also be lodged with Football Australia through their online form, by Phone – 1800 571 850 or email:

MPOEmail@footballaustralia.com.au