

Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

February 2026

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction..... | 2 |
| Purpose..... | 2 |
| Scope..... | 2 |
| References | 2 |
| Definitions | 2 |
| Confidentiality | 3 |
| Complaint handling process..... | 3 |
| Raising a concern or making a complaint | 3 |
| Complaints involving children | 3 |
| Acknowledgment of the complaint..... | 3 |
| Initial assessment and addressing complaints..... | 3 |
| Informal resolution of complaints | 4 |
| Formal investigation of complaints..... | 4 |
| Dismissal of complaints | 4 |
| No further action | 5 |
| Withdrawing a complaint | 5 |
| Decisions and notification of outcome | 5 |
| Appealing a decision | 5 |
| Closing the complaint, record keeping, redress and review | 5 |
| Review of this policy..... | 5 |
| Attachment A: BUFC Notice of Formal Complaint | 6 |
| Attachment B: Football Australia Complaint Handling Flowchart | 7 |

Introduction

Barnstoneworth United Football Club was formed in 1998 as a laid-back and welcoming club. BUFC has grown to include junior, women's and all age teams with a supportive atmosphere. BUFC is committed to providing a safe environment for all members of the club.

Purpose

The objective of this policy is to provide support for members in the event of a dispute or poor behaviour. It outlines the process for making a complaint, support for individuals, and the steps BUFC may take to resolve complaints and disputes.

BUFC is committed to the following principles:

- deal with the complaint promptly, seriously and sensitively and in accordance with the terms of this Policy;
- treat complaints in a consistent and fair manner (whilst acknowledging that each complaint is unique);
- recognise that Procedural Fairness is the minimum standard of fairness to be applied in the determination of a complaint;
- keep the complaint confidential and not disclose a complaint to another person without the Complainant's consent, except if:
 - required by law; or
 - disclosure is necessary to effectively deal with the complaint (including by directing the complaint to the appropriate organisation).

Scope

This policy applies to situations that involve BUFC only. Disputes or poor behaviour that involve other clubs or their members should be resolved by ODFA or Football NSW.

Please contact the club in such instances.

References

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Barnstoneworth United Football Club Orange Constitution
- Barnstoneworth United Football Club Orange Child Safe Policy
- Barnstoneworth United Football Club Orange Code of Conduct
- Football Australia: Member Protection Framework - National Complaints Procedure

Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|--------------------|--|
| BUFC | Barnstoneworth United Football Club (Orange) |
| Complainant | The person making a complaint |
| MPIO | Member Protection Information Officer |

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|-------------------|---|
| ODFA | Orange & Districts Football Association |
| Policy | Barnstoneworth United Football Club (Orange) Complaints and Disciplinary Policy |
| Respondent | The person about whom a complaint is made |

Confidentiality

1. BUFC will endeavour to treat complaints confidentially, protecting the privacy of the complainant and parties involved.
2. Complaints and information will be stored securely.
3. BUFC will seek permission from the individual before information is shared with other parties.

Complaint handling process

Raising a concern or making a complaint

Any person may make a complaint. They may do so in writing, in person or over the telephone.

Individuals are encouraged to get in touch with the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) initially. However, they can choose to make a complaint without speaking to the MPIO first.

Complaints can be submitted using the Notice of Complaint Form in Attachment A. Complaints should include specific details about the issue, including what happened, where it happened, when it happened, here it happened, and who was involved (including witnesses who may be able to assist).

Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

The MPIO can be contacted at mpio@bufc-orange.com

Complaints involving children

Please refer to the BUFC Child Safe Policy for complaints involving children. Any concerns or allegations of inappropriate conduct that involve a child or young person should be reported immediately.

Acknowledgment of the complaint

BUFC will acknowledge receipt of complaints in writing promptly.

Initial assessment and addressing complaints

On receipt of a complaint, BUFC will assess how to proceed. BUFC may nominate a committee member or the MPIO to seek further information from the persons involved and recommend how to deal with a complaint.

At this point, BUFC can choose to:

- Follow an informal process to resolve the complaint

- Set up a formal investigation
- Dismiss the complaint
- Take no further action

Informal resolution of complaints

For an informal process, BUFC may nominate a committee member or the MPIO to resolve the complaint.

The person nominated will seek to either observe the behaviour described in the complaint, discuss the issue with parties involved to mediate between them and find a resolution.

The person nominated will notify the club of the outcome of the informal process and recommend any further action to be taken by the club.

Recommendations may include:

- Formal mediation
- An apology
- Counselling
- A formal warning.

Formal investigation of complaints

For issues that cannot be resolved informally, BUFC may set up a formal investigation. BUFC may nominate members to a disciplinary committee.

A formal investigation will endeavour to speak to the parties involved, provide sufficient details of the complaint to the respondent for procedural fairness, seek information from any witnesses.

The committee will provide a report to BUFC with a finding that the complaint is:

- Substantiated;
- Inconclusive;
- Unsubstantiated; and/or
- Mischievous, vexatious or knowingly untrue.

Should the report include a finding that the complaint is substantiated, the report may include a recommendation on the remedy sought by the complainant. If a complaint is substantiated the report may also include a recommendation of disciplinary action against the Respondent.

In a formal investigation the complainant and respondent are entitled to support persons or advisers.

Dismissal of complaints

BUFC may choose to dismiss complaints for certain reasons, including:

- The complaint has insufficient detail to be investigated.
- The complainant is anonymous.
- The complaint is considered vexatious or mischievous.

No further action

For some issues no further action is required. This may be a complaint that has been resolved prior to an informal or formal process, no remedy is sought, or an issue that requires further observation or monitoring.

Withdrawing a complaint

A complaint can be withdrawn at any time.

Interim suspension

BUFC may place interim suspension on members when considered necessary. An interim suspension may only be in place until a formal investigation or disciplinary committee meeting is concluded.

Decisions and notification of outcome

BUFC will notify the complainant of the outcome of their complaint.

BUFC may discipline a member found to have engaged in conduct in breach of the Code of Conduct or the Constitution. In such cases the Club will form a disciplinary committee and determine if a member should be sanctioned.

Appealing a decision

Sanctioned members may appeal a decision following a formal investigation.

Appeals must be made in writing to the club secretary within 14 days of the decision.

Closing the complaint, record keeping, redress and review

BUFC will keep records of complaints and investigations. Records will be stored securely.

Review of this policy

This policy should be reviewed at least every two years.

Attachment B: Football Australia Complaint Handling Flowchart

