		<b>FOOTBALL SOUTH AUSTRALIA</b>  <b>Procedures and Policies</b>	
<b>Subject:</b>	Complaints Procedure Process	<b>Date Implemented</b>	November 2016
<b>Review:</b>	Biennially	<b>Date Amended</b>	April 2026

## 1. Rationale

- 1.1. Football South Australia is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and accessible complaints process for all stakeholders. This procedure outlines how complaints are managed, escalated and resolved, ensuring alignment with Football Australia regulations, safeguarding obligations and principles of natural justice.
- 1.2. Complaints may vary in severity and complexity and may be addressed informally or formally. All complaints will be handled in a timely, consistent and respectful manner.

## 2. Scope and Application

- 2.1. This procedure applies to all Football South Australia staff, clubs, associations, participants and stakeholders.
- 2.2. *Required Outcome 1:*  
To ensure that all clubs and affiliated associations abide by the Football Australia (FA) and Football South Australia Competition Rules and Regulations, policies and procedures.
- 2.3. *Required Outcome 2:*  
To provide a clear and concise complaints process including an appeal process.
- 2.4. *Required Outcome 3:*  
To provide consistency and fair handling of all complaints.

## 3. COMPLAINT PROCESS

### 3.1. Prior to Submitting a Formal Complaint

- 3.1.1. Where appropriate to do so, the complainant must first address the matter with the relevant person(s) or organisation. This step may be bypassed where the matter involves safeguarding concerns, serious misconduct, or where it is not appropriate or safe to do so. If the complaint is in relation to a club or

association, in the first instance, the club and/or association should be provided with the opportunity to resolve the matter.

- 3.1.2. In submitting a complaint to a club or association, this may in the first instance be undertaken informally. This may involve having a conversation with the relevant person about the complaint. If the matter is resolved no further action is required.
- 3.1.3. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the complaint should be submitted in writing to the relevant party outlining the nature of the complaint and the outcome that is wanted. Football South Australia recommends a response timeframe of 7 days unless otherwise agreed. If the matter is resolved no further action is required.
- 3.1.4. If the complaint is not resolved by the club/association following informal and formal process, a formal complaint may be made to Football South Australia. Prior to doing so, a person may contact Football South Australia to determine if the matter can be resolved without making a formal complaint. Football South Australia may provide guidance on process; however, a formal determination will only be made once a complaint has been formally submitted and assessed.

### **3.2. Submission of a Formal Complaint.**

- 3.2.1. All complaints are to be submitted in writing. The information should be specific and provide details relating to the actual complaint.
- 3.2.2. If the complaint is in relation to a competition matter, it should be addressed to the relevant Competition Administrator. Please note that Football South Australia Competition Staff will not address matters with individuals if they have not been addressed through their club.
- 3.2.3. If the complainant is unsure who the matter is to be addressed to, they may contact Football South Australia for further information.
- 3.2.4. Football South Australia will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 5 business days and undertake an initial assessment within 10 business days.
- 3.2.5. The initial assessment will determine whether the complaint falls within Football South Australia's jurisdiction, whether sufficient information has been provided, and the appropriate next steps (including investigation, referral, or no further action). The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the initial assessment and the next steps.

### **3.3. Investigating a Complaint**

- 3.3.1. Where a complaint proceeds beyond the initial assessment, it will be formally investigated. Investigation may entail requesting additional information, referring the matter to another person within the organisation or referring the matter to Football South Australia Disciplinary Committee. Investigations may also involve referral to relevant Football Australia frameworks or external authorities where appropriate.
- 3.3.2. If the matter is not referred to the Disciplinary Committee and a determination is made by Football South Australia, a written response relating to the findings and the action to be implemented will be conveyed to the complainant. Where investigations exceed 14 days, updates will be provided to the complainant.

### 3.4. **Safeguarding and Integrity Matters**

- 3.4.1. Complaints relating to child safety, abuse, harassment, discrimination, or integrity concerns will be managed in accordance with Football South Australia's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and relevant Football Australia frameworks.
- 3.4.2. Such matters may be escalated directly and may bypass standard complaint processes where required.

### 3.5. **Disciplinary Committee**

Matters referred to the Disciplinary Committee will be managed in accordance with Football South Australia and Football Australia regulations.

### 3.6. **Appeal Process**

- 3.6.1. A person may appeal a decision of Football South Australia or the Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the Football Australia National Regulations (including National Disciplinary Regulations and relevant grievance frameworks) and Football South Australia Disciplinary and Judicial Body Regulations.
- 3.6.2. To lodge an appeal, the appeal must be in writing and accompanied by the prescribed appeal fee as outlined in Football South Australia or Football Australia regulations.
- 3.6.3. On receipt of the appeal, Football South Australia will refer the matter to the Appeal Committee.
- 3.6.4. An Appeal Hearing will be scheduled and notified to the person who submitted the appeal.

3.6.5. The Appeal Committee will hear the matter and provide a finding. The outcome of the hearing may be provided verbally at the hearing. All findings will be provided in writing to the complainant within 7 days, where possible.

#### **4. National Grievance Procedure**

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the above process, a grievance may be submitted to Football Australia in accordance with the FA Grievance Procedure By-Law.

#### **5. Confidentiality and Privacy**

All complaints will be managed in accordance with applicable privacy legislation and legal obligations regarding confidentiality and the handling of personal information. Where relevant, matters will also be managed in alignment with Football Australia Policies and Regulations.

#### **6. Vexatious or Frivolous Complaints**

Football South Australia reserves the right to decline or discontinue complaints that are deemed vexatious, frivolous, or lacking in substance.


#### **7. Record Keeping**

All complaints, investigations and outcomes will be recorded and retained in accordance with Football South Australia's record management practices and applicable privacy obligations.

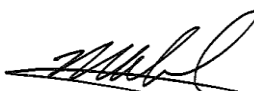
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#### **Signatures:**

Signed

  
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Football South Australia President

Signed

  
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Football South Australia CEO

*Next policy review date: March 2028*