



Complaint and Conflict Resolution Policy

Introduction

Disagreements, both personal and technical, are sometimes unavoidable. People join teams for different reasons, and have different ideas about issues brought forward and how they should be dealt with. People are impassioned by what they care about which is usually a good thing. It is always good to take some time to think before turning a disagreement into a public dispute or a public display of disrespect.

Team members are encouraged to speak to their President or Captain regarding code of conduct concerns, but always away from other team members in a private setting. If the matter cannot be dealt with appropriately in this context, it must be brought to the attention of the Survivors Abreast Board of Directors for action at the next Board meeting.

All parties in a dispute have the right to make verbal and or written presentations to the Board of Directors. The Survivors Abreast Board can then issue a verbal warning, a written warning, a period of suspension or a written letter of dismissal as determined by agreement of a quorum at a Board meeting, if it is found that the Survivors Abreast Behavioral Guideline or written policies are not being followed by a team member

Policy Statement

This policy shall govern the process to be followed for the handling of Complaints and Conflict Resolution. The overall purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent and uniform process to respond to Complaints and Conflicts regarding team/board members, coaches, or operational procedures.

Definitions

Complaint – an expression of dissatisfaction about the action, or lack of action taken, regarding operations, or actions by a team/board member. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- a perceived failure to do something agreed to;
- a failure to observe a policy or procedure;
- unfair or discourteous actions/statements by a member

Complainant – the person who is dissatisfied and filing the complaint.

Request – a request for a specific change in policy or procedure i.e. not a Complaint.

Guiding Principles

A quorum of the board of directors will deal with all Complaints promptly, courteously, impartially and professionally.

Members of the board will treat Complaints as confidential. The identity of the Complainant will be made known only to those who need to know in order to consider the Complaint. All participants



in the complaint process shall keep the details of the Complaint confidential except as may be required by law.

Some individuals may require assistance to make a Complaint, and Complaints can be made on their behalf, provided that the person affected has given their consent in writing.

Anonymous Complaints will not be acted upon.

Complaint Process

Complaints should be in writing and include information such as:

- Details of what happened.
- Where did this happen? Is it within the board of director's areas of responsibility?
- When it happened?
- Who was involved?
- What was said or done, or not done?
- What kind of resolution is being sought?
- Contact details of the Complainant

Procedure for Managing Complaints

- i. All Complaints will be dated upon receipt and forwarded to the President to commence the Complaints process.
- ii. The President will work in cooperation with a quorum of the board of directors to manage the Complaint process. Should the Complaint involve the President, the Vice President or another designate will oversee the Complaint process.
- iii. All Complaints necessitate a review/investigation and a written response.
- iv. Complainants must receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their Complaint, in the form of an email, within five (5) business days.
- v. The Complainant may be contacted to clarify the Complaint. The Complaint may be closed at this point if a resolution is mutually determined.
- vi. Ideally within 20 business days, a response is to be provided to Complainants, barring exceptional circumstances.
- vii. Should there be a need for additional response time the Complainant will be advised within the 20 day time frame that additional time is required including the projected time frame for a response. Complainants will be provided updates during the review process.
- viii. The response to the Complaint will include:
 - background related to the Complaint and an outline of the investigation/review process



- action being taken to address the Complaint
- a clear and understandable explanation for how a decision on the resolution to the Complaint was made.

It may also include:

- an apology, reconsideration, reimbursement, or change in policy – as possible remedies.

Progressive Discipline

There are circumstances that require the use of disciplinary measures in order to maintain a pleasant team environment. This generally involves using increasingly severe steps or measures when a team member fails to correct a problem.

1. Normally, corrective action will be applied with increasing severity as the unsatisfactory, misconduct continues. The board reserves the right to omit or repeat Progressive Discipline steps depending on the frequency, severity, and/or nature of misconduct exhibited. In addition, the board may proceed to more severe measures including suspension, for situations such as serious misconduct, harassment, incidents of physical violence or any behavior that adversely affects the health and safety of team members or violates the by-laws or written policies of the Corporation.
2. The Board of Directors is responsible for documenting all Progressive Discipline action.
3. Recommended steps of progressive discipline are as follows:

Action	
Counselling	Meeting notes are kept by the President in a sealed envelope
Verbal Warning	Meeting notes are filed with previous notes and kept by the President in a sealed envelope
Written Warning	Discussion is documented and filed with the verbal warning notes and other notes and are kept by the President in a sealed envelope
Last Chance/Temporary Suspension	Member is temporarily suspended from all team activities for one month. Discussion is documented and filed with the verbal warning, written warning and other notes kept by the President in a sealed envelope.
Dismissal	Member is permanently suspended from all team activities. All documentation is shredded.

Counselling

Counselling involves a verbal discussion alerting the team member of the unsatisfactory performance or misconduct and allowing time for improvement. The President, Team Captain or designate will be in attendance and document these discussions as a record of the conversation and desired outcome(s). Notes will be kept by the President in a sealed envelope.



Verbal Warning

A Verbal warning occurs if the undesired behaviour/performance continues. The President, Team Captain or designate will be in attendance and document these discussions as a record of the conversation and desired outcome(s). This step differs from the previous in that the language of “warning” is utilized. Additional notes will be kept by the President with original notes in a sealed envelope.

Written Warning

The next step in the discipline process is a Written Warning. A Written Warning occurs if the undesired behavior/performance persists or is more serious in nature. This step is also documented as a Written Warning signed by the team member and added to the previous documentation kept by the President in a sealed envelope.

Last Chance/ Temporary Suspension

If there is not the required improvement, a decision may be made to either establish a Last Chance Agreement or place the team member on Suspension. Either of these alternatives represents the final step of the progressive discipline process prior to expulsion. This process is also documented as such, signed by the team member and added to the previous documentation kept by the President in a sealed envelope.

Cumulative Issues

In some cases, members may have repeated behavioral issues which may require a separate escalation plan for each instance. Thus, the board of directors may be responsible for managing multiple negative behaviors at once.

In these cases, the board may determine performance is not likely to improve and issue a permanent suspension.

Dismissal

The final step of the progressive discipline process is expulsion from the team. Should the team member’s performance or conduct not improve, the board of directors will determine if dismissal is appropriate. The decision to dismiss will be based on the facts, circumstances and documentation.

The team member may appeal a suspension or expulsion in accordance with Section 15, Discipline of Members of the team By-laws.

Once a complaint or conflict is resolved or progressive disciplinary steps have been taken, the board of directors will “debrief” at the next board meeting and determine whether any additional steps should be taken or amendments should be made to this policy. Such amendments or additions shall be approved by Resolution at the next team meeting.

History:	Date:	Comments:
Original Policy:	August 31, 2016	Approved by the team at the Sept 7, 2016 meeting
Amendment:		
Amendment:		