



Ottawa TFC*

2075 Trim Road, Orleans Ontario, K4A 3R2
Tel: 613-573-7627 www.ottawatfc.com



OTTAWA TFC*

DISCIPLINE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

Ottawa TFC (Ottawa TFC or the Club) is committed to providing a safe environment for its players, coaches, volunteers, employees, members, directors, and officials. The safety, rights and well-being of those participating in Ottawa TFC programs is a priority in the Club's daily operations.

Ottawa TFC conducts itself according to the policies of its governing associations (Canada Soccer, Ontario Soccer, Eastern Ontario District Soccer Association) and may rely on other organizations and international standards for guidance and best practices in developing its policies and processes.

The purpose of this policy is to set out Ottawa TFC's approach to discipline management and the associated processes and procedures for discipline issues.

POLICY

Ontario Soccer's Discipline Policies will govern and apply to all Ottawa TFC competitive youth soccer players and teams. These discipline issues are referred to in this Policy as "**OS-Governed Discipline Matters**". OS-Governed Discipline Matters are managed and dealt with by the Eastern Ontario District Soccer Association (EODSA) on behalf of Ontario Soccer.

Discipline issues arising from other Ottawa TFC-sanctioned soccer play, including Ottawa TFC-sponsored tournaments for youth, and adult house league soccer players and teams, are referred to in this Policy as "**Internal Discipline Matters**". Internal Discipline Matters are managed and dealt with by Ottawa TFC.

Other discipline issues arising under Ottawa TFC policies (i.e. Code of Conduct, Anti-Harassment Policy, Child Protection Policy, etc.), will be managed by Ottawa TFC and may be dealt with using procedures set forth in this Policy. These discipline issues are referred to in this Policy as "**Other Discipline Matters**".

This Policy does not apply to salaried employees of Ottawa TFC in the carrying out of their employment, except in cases where their conduct on the playing field or as a Team Official may come into question.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy:

"Adult Participant" includes all Ottawa TFC players, parents/guardians, coaches, referees, volunteers, employees, members, directors, suppliers, sponsors, and officials over the age of 18 who interact directly with children while conducting their duties at Ottawa TFC.

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“Adult” refers to anyone aged 18 and over.

“Children” or "Child" refers to anyone under the age of 18.

"Discipline by Hearing or DBH" refers to a method of dealing with a discipline matter which consists of a three-person panel conducting a hearing where the accused, advisors, observers, game officials and witnesses attend.

"Discipline by Review or DBR" refers to a method of dealing with a discipline matter where the matter is dealt with by a three-person panel.

"EODSA" refers to the Eastern Ontario District Soccer Association, the governing body of amateur soccer in Eastern Ontario.

"Internal Discipline Matters" refer to discipline issues arising from Ottawa TFC-sanctioned soccer play, including Ottawa TFC-sponsored tournaments, and Ottawa TFC's adult house league soccer players and teams, which discipline matters are managed and dealt with by Ottawa TFC.

"OS" refers to Ontario Soccer, the governing body for amateur soccer play in Ontario.

"OS-Governed Discipline Matters" are discipline matters that apply to Ottawa TFC competitive youth players and teams, and which are dealt with by the Eastern Ontario District Soccer Association (EODSA) on behalf of Ontario Soccer.

"Other Discipline Matters" refer to discipline issues other than those arising from soccer play, arising from Ottawa TFC's Policies (eg. Code of Conduct, Harassment Policy, Protection of Children Policy, etc.) which will be managed by Ottawa TFC and may be dealt with using procedures in this Discipline Policy.

"Regular Game Play" refers to soccer matches where Ottawa TFC (i) competitive youth players and (ii) adult house league players, compete.

"Team Officials" are those unpaid individuals who provide services to the Club for the duration of a soccer season and could include, but are not limited to, persons such as team managers, team treasurers, equipment managers, and assistant coaches. Individuals who provide unpaid services, often on a one-time basis, such as support at tournaments or fundraising support, are not considered Team Officials.

"Technical Coach" is a coach, under the age of 18, who interacts directly with children while conducting their duties at Ottawa TFC.

"Technical Game Official" is a referee, under the age of 18, who interacts directly with children while conducting their duties at Ottawa TFC.

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"Volunteer" is an Adult Participant, as defined above. Volunteers are not Team Officials or Technical Coaches but are individuals who perform voluntary services for Ottawa TFC on an occasional basis, such as at tournaments. Volunteers are representatives of Ottawa TFC and are subject to all Ottawa TFC's policies and guidelines.

DISCIPLINE METHODS

All Adult Participants, Child players, Team Officials, Technical Coaches, and Technical Game Officials should familiarize themselves with the penalties for offences and the procedures for administering discipline at Ottawa TFC.

Ottawa TFC is committed to ensuring that all discipline matters are dealt with expeditiously and confidentially.

1. *Regular Game Play Discipline*

Regular Game Play discipline matters fall into two categories:

- (i) OS-Governed Discipline Matters, and
- (ii) Internal Discipline Matters

and are dealt with as follows:

- ✓ OS-Governed Discipline Matters will be handled by either a **Discipline by Hearing** (DBH) or **Discipline by Review** (DBR). OS Rules determine whether the issue to be handled by DBH or DBR (which rules are set out on the OSA website [insert link]).
- ✓ Internal Discipline Matters will be handled by a three-person discipline panel, consisting of a chair, a recording member, and at least one other member. Internal Discipline Matters may be handled by either a **Discipline by Hearing** (DBH) or a **Discipline by Review** (DBR).

A DBH requires the attendance of all parties involved.

A DBR is conducted by a discipline panel which reviews the information provided and renders a decision on appropriate action to be taken.

2. *Other Discipline Matters*

Discipline issues arising from breach of Ottawa TFC policies (such as the Code of Conduct, Anti-Harassment Policy, Protection of Children Policy, etc.) will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of Ottawa TFC, and may be dealt with using procedures set out herein such as DBH or DBR.

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3. *Tournament Discipline*

Discipline matters arising at any Ottawa TFC-sponsored tournament are dealt with below in the Tournament Discipline section.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

1. *Discipline by Hearing (DBH) - Procedures*

DBH hearings are conducted on a regular basis with hearing dates scheduled and posted on the Ottawa TFC website [insert link].

When hearings are held outside the scheduled dates, persons required to attend a DHR will be advised in writing no less than seven days in advance of the hearing date by the issuance of a notice of hearing. The notice of hearing will include:

- ✓ the exact nature of the charges,
- ✓ the misconduct type,
- ✓ the OS reference numbers,
- ✓ the rights of the accused to
 - request copies of all reports upon which charges have been based,
 - request a postponement,
 - bring an advisor, observers and/or witnesses.

Copies of reports requested by the accused will be forwarded within two days of receipt of request.

Notice will be sent to all parties required to attend and copies sent to appropriate governing bodies and individuals. A panel will be identified by the Discipline Chair and given notice of the pending cases to be dealt with. Copies of all reports, game sheets and relevant written statements will be included for each panel member.

Discipline hearings may be held for matters of misconduct involving persons other than players, such as coaching staff, parents, spectators or any other registered Club member reported for misconduct. Certain offences deemed more serious are considered OS-Governed Discipline Matters and are referred to the EODSA on behalf of Ontario Soccer.

Postponement of Hearing

Any party required to attend a hearing may request one postponement of the scheduled hearing by submitting a written request to discipline@ottawatfc.com to be received at least four days prior to the date of the hearing, stating the reason for the requested postponement, and accompanied by the appropriate fee, as set out in this policy.



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Failing to Attend a Hearing

An accused who fails to attend a hearing when required to do so, may submit a request in writing discipline@ottawatfc.com, accompanied by the appropriate fee, to request another hearing.

Attendance at Hearing

Accused - An accused individual must attend the hearing scheduled for their offence. An accused less than 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult, who will act as an advisor to the accused. The hearing cannot proceed if the accused is not accompanied by an adult, and accordingly, the accused will be suspended from play until the hearing can be rescheduled. An advisor may also appear at the hearing without the accused and act on his/her behalf.

Advisors - All advisors must be 18 years of age or older. Advisors may not question the competence of game officials but may question a witness for clarification purposes only. Advisors may not act as witnesses or provide testimony.

Observers - An accused may bring a maximum of two Observers to a hearing. Observers attend the hearing to ensure that the accused receives a fair hearing according to published rules. Observers are not witnesses and do not provide testimony. Observers may be invited to speak at a hearing but only at the request and discretion of the Discipline Chair.

Game Officials - Game officials required to attend a hearing regarding discipline matters arising from an official's report, may be accompanied by a District Referee Coordinator or a designate, and may act as an advisor to the game official providing testimony.

Witness - Each party to the hearing is entitled to have witnesses, who must attend the hearing in person. Written reports from witnesses will not be accepted as testimony.

Hearing Procedures

Each hearing will be closed to all persons other than those permitted to attend or invited to attend as set out above in the Attendance at Hearing section.

The accused must be present for the entire Hearing unless he/she is under 18 years of age and is represented by an advisor.

All parties will be brought into the hearing room at the commencement of the hearing. Names and status of all attendees will be noted by the recording member of the Discipline Panel. The Chair of the Discipline Panel will explain the process to be followed, and will discuss the rights and limitations of all parties to the hearing.

The Chair of the Discipline Panel will read aloud the charges from the Hearing Notice together with any other reports. Witnesses will leave the room until their testimony is required.

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The accused is permitted to question the individual submitting any reports, if they are present. If the report writer is not present the accused may question the report itself.

Witnesses will be brought into the hearing room one at a time at the request of any party or the Discipline Panel.

The Discipline Panel may question any witnesses or the accused.

The accused and the person submitting a report used as evidence will be given the opportunity to present final comments.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Chair of the Discipline Panel will declare the hearing recessed and notify the parties of their rights of appeal.

A decision will be arrived at by the Discipline Panel and a Notice of Decision will be rendered in writing to all parties within seven days of the date of the hearing.

Decisions rendered will include:

- ✓ the exact offense
- ✓ the terms of discipline imposed including suspension fees, fines, term, etc.
- ✓ rights of appeal information

Decisions and related penalties will be recorded and kept in the official records of the Club for a period of three years. A summary of all penalties will be forwarded to EODSA as required.

Penalties

Minimum penalties will be rendered in all disciplinary decisions pursuant to OS rules. More severe penalties than the minimum may be deemed appropriate in some cases, and in any event, decisions must be no less severe than those set out by OS.

Refusal or Failure to Participate in Hearing

An accused individual who refuses to participate in a discipline hearing, or who leaves a hearing before it concludes, thus preventing the Discipline Panel from rendering a decision, will be suspended from all soccer-related activities until such time that the accused requests, in writing, another hearing and appears at that hearing. However, if the Discipline Panel determines that sufficient evidence has been presented before the accused leaves the hearing, as set out above, the Discipline Panel may render its decision.

Applicable fees for rescheduling hearings will apply in all cases.

Discipline Fees/Fines

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The following fees will apply and must be received by Ottawa TFC before the rendering of any decision or commencement of any Hearing.

Fee	Amount
Discipline Hearing - Administrative Fee	\$25.00
Request for a Discipline Hearing	\$25.00
Request for Postponement of Discipline Hearing	\$25.00
Request for Discipline Hearing after Failing to Appear	\$75.00
Request for each subsequent postponement	\$50.00

Any fines rendered as a result of a Discipline Hearing must be paid within 21 days of the decision. Any fines or fees set out above, not paid within the timeframe required, will result in a suspension from all soccer-related activities until such time as those fees/fines are paid in full.

2. *Discipline by Review (DBR) - Procedures*

DBRs are conducted by a three-person panel, consisting of a chair, a recording member, and one other member. The panel reviews the charges and any evidence available, and determines appropriate penalties. The accused will be notified in writing of the panel's decision within seven days of the DBR.

The decision of the DBR panel will include the following details:

- ✓ the exact offense
- ✓ the terms of discipline imposed including suspension fees, fines, term, etc.
- ✓ rights of appeal information

Decisions and related penalties will be recorded and kept in the official records of the Club for a period of three years. A summary of all penalties will be forwarded to EODSA as required.

3. *Tournament Discipline*

The Tournament Chair of any Ottawa TFC-sponsored tournament will ensure that a Discipline Hearing/Review Panel is established for every such tournament. Offences arising at such tournaments will be dealt with by the Discipline Panel either by DBR or DBH as appropriate, immediately after the game at which the offence or misconduct was reported. The Discipline Panel's decisions will be considered final and reported by the Discipline Chair to the appropriate governing body after the tournament. OS-Tournament rules will apply and prevail for all discipline action required at Ottawa-TFC sponsored tournaments. Probation or suspended sentences are not permitted.

4. *Record Keeping*

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All caution, dismissal and special incident reports are reviewed by the Discipline Chair to ensure that the proper charge is identified for each accused prior to determining penalties or scheduling a hearing. All reports are retained by the Club as official records for a period of three years.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISCIPLINE PANEL MEMBERS

A discipline panel will consist of three members: a chair and two other members, one of whom will be responsible for recording the proceedings as accurately as possible. Members of a Discipline Panel may be either appointed or elected.

Discipline Panel Members will be familiar with this Policy and its related processes, and should familiarize themselves with the OS Discipline Policy and related sanctions.

A Discipline Panel is responsible for investigating any formal complaint brought to their attention or on information that becomes available to it that is indicative of misconduct and is obligated to:

- ✓ Uphold the principles of natural justice and duty to act fairly.
- ✓ Ensure that the hearing process is free of bias, is impartial and unprejudiced.
- ✓ Provide adequate notices of hearing that identify the critical issues and contain sufficient information for respondents to be able to participate meaningfully in the decision-making process.
- ✓ Ensure a fair hearing where the accused is given a reasonable opportunity to represent themselves in person.
- ✓ Thoroughly consider the respondent's submissions in making decisions.
- ✓ Inquire into all allegations of misconduct and to hold hearings when necessary.
- ✓ Conduct such hearings in accordance within the provisions of the OS Soccer Discipline Rules.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Training will be undertaken by individuals identified by Ottawa TFC as having responsibility for dealing with complaints and disciplinary procedures under this Policy.

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

All comments or questions relating to this Policy and its related processes, may be directed to discipline@ottawatfc.com. Any comments or questions regarding specific discipline matters must be directed to discipline@ottawatfc.com.

Approved by Board of Directors
August 27, 2019

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