

Avoca Football Netball Club Complaint, Grievance & Resolution Procedure.

The Avoca Football Netball Club (AFNC) has adopted the following Complaint, Grievance and Resolution Procedure to provide members with a structured and fair system to resolve any grievances, complaints or concerns that may arise when they feel they have not been dealt with fairly and/or reasonably by another member of the Club, by the Association or where they have identified a concern regarding the welfare of another player.

The Club's commitment to this procedure is detailed below and all cases will be treated seriously and confidentially throughout the process. The AFNC is committed to providing all members with the following:

- A standard of behaviour as required by organization and individual codes of conduct to be accepted and signed by all members.
- Prompt action when a concern, complaint/allegation is made
- A documented Complaint, Grievance and Resolution procedure with simple clear steps, a set timeline and a detailed description of all parties' responsibilities
- Confidentiality respect, dignity, fairness and a common sense approach achieved by ensuring that:-
 - All members have the right to be informed of the details of a complaint whilst maintaining confidentiality of complainant if applicable
 - All parties to a complaint have a right to be heard and respond
 - Any party who has raised a concern around the welfare of a player/member has a right for confidentiality to be maintained
 - Any party who has had a concern raised regarding their welfare has a right to be protected and offered mentoring if required
 - All submissions and evidence will be impartially considered
 - The decision maker will not be unduly influenced by any party to a complaint and will always uphold the rules of impartiality. If a conflict of interest arises during the process of resolution for any party the matter will be referred to the committee for discussion while at all times maintaining confidentiality of the complainant. It is important that every member is aware that there are several options for grievance resolution and or concerns raised, both formal and informal. The procedure provides a structure for handling any concerns in a confidential, impartial, professional and respectful forum.

STEPS

Once it has been established that a complaint exists then the step by step grievance procedures should be followed.

Step 1. Informal resolution. Determine a person within the club committee structure to approach about your concern - anyone on the committee is available to handle a query at this stage including captains, coaches, senior or junior co-ordinators. The role of the committee member approached at this stage is to; listen, support and gain information and inform complainant of options available. Whoever is approached on the committee regarding a concern/grievance must first investigate and establish the following;

- A. That a complaint, grievance or welfare concern exists (this done through compilation of facts and may include speaking to witnesses and gathering information).
- B. If a complaint is made about a person or decision, steps then taken could include one of the following;
 - Committee member approaches the party involved regarding the issue.

- Or if the complainant feels that the committee member should not discuss the issue directly with the person/s concerned informally opting for more investigation into the matter. Regardless of two options above - if the complainant feels the above informal verbal process does not result in a positive outcome within 14 days of discussion with all parties, they move to the next step.

Step 2. Executive Committee assisted mediation. Depending on the person/s involved in the issue, a member or/members of the Club Executive (can include Football or Netball Exec) can investigate and consider the nature of the grievance or concern and determine with your assistance and some research whether the concern is to be handled officially or informally. If the matter is to be dealt with informally by the Executive and a resolution is achieved the matter is resolved.

Step 3. Forward of Grievance in writing to the AFNC Committee. If however your request cannot be resolved informally and you wish to proceed further, the Club will require you to complete an Incident Management Form for the recording of the complaint, which will be treated as confidential. The form clearly sets out contact details, date of issue, any action already taken by the complainant and suggested resolutions desired. After considering the matter and discussing with the Complainant, an independent club appointed Hearing Officer (this will be a member of the AFNC Committee) will either:

- A. Propose a possible solution/s after researching the matter in more detail and if resolved report the result by minuting the matter as resolved with generic reporting to committee at the next scheduled Committee meeting (maintaining confidentiality at all times if reporting to full committee).

OR (if this does not result in a positive resolution)

- B. Refer matter to a formal mediation process with an independent Mediation Officer (external to the AFNC) who will review the matter and if appropriate, report their findings and ask all parties to attend mediation to be scheduled no less than 14 days from notification of the complaint to the Hearing Officer. The other party/ies will be requested to complete the Incident Management Form in response to the complaint. The meeting will be arranged and each party will have the opportunity to express their point of view regarding the issue and offer possible resolution options. Any party to the proceedings shall be permitted to attend the mediation with a nominated advocate of their choice should they so wish. The Mediation Officer will record main points of the meeting using the Mediation Form.

Positive resolution

Upon resolution of a complaint, any agreed actions and associated time frames will be documented:

- All results will be noted on the Mediation form.
- All parties will be required to sign the Mediation form.
- The Mediation Officer will present resolution and agreed actions at the next scheduled Committee Meeting for delegation of any proposed actions.

Grievance Unresolved

If a resolution is not agreed upon by each party concerned:

- The Mediation Officer will forward the matter for General Business consideration at the next Committee meeting.
- The committee will consider the matter and vote on a resolution which will be minuted. A copy of the proposed resolution will be emailed/mailed to all parties with the requirement for response either in agreement or not in agreement. The committee decision is FINAL.

- If the resolution suggested by the Committee is accepted by all parties (confirmed by an emailed response to the Mediation Officer), the matter is noted as resolved and both parties are notified by phone and email. If the resolution suggested by the Committee is not accepted by one party, the matter is recorded as unresolved. At any stage, any party concerned may seek resolution with Consumer Affairs Victoria, AFL Goldfields or Netball Victoria or in accordance with the Act or Law.

