



THE PENNANT HILLS AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB

PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

Pennant Hills AFC aims to deliver a sporting experience that is safe, fair and inclusive for all, whether you are a player, administrator, supporter, volunteer or any other person who engages with the code.

The Club aims to provide a culture where players, officials, members, supporters, families and all other members of the community can connect and engage in meaningful and positive relationships.

Pennant Hills AFC recognise that the behaviour of its players can strengthen or weaken the reputation of Australian Rules Football in NSW.

This code of Conduct does not replace but supports and is subordinate to the AFL NSW/ACT Code of Conduct. This can be found as Appendix A on page 77 of the 2021 AFL NSW/ACT rules.

<https://sydneyafl.com.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2021/05/2021-NSW-ACT-Rules-AFL-Sydney-DRAFT-VERSION-v7-07.05.21.pdf>

All members of Pennant Hills AFC accept to adopt these codes of conduct upon registering or becoming a member of the club.

The Code of Conduct aims to promote and strengthen the reputation of Australian Football in NSW and the ACT by establishing a standard of performance, behaviour and professionalism for its participants and stakeholders. It also seeks to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants and stakeholders and deter conduct that could impair confidence in the honest and professional conduct of Matches or in the integrity and good character of its participants.

The Code of Conduct does not govern Reportable Offences, the Order-Off Rule, or Citations.

Where an incident may constitute both a Reportable Offence and a breach of the Code of Conduct, the charge of a Reportable Offence will take precedence. An individual must not be penalised under both the Prescribed Penalty System and the Code of Conduct.



THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Each Player must:

- (a) Not bring the game of Australian Football, the AFL, AFL NSW/ACT or the League or the Club into disrepute.
- (b) Participate in Competition Matches in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football.
- (c) Respect the spirit of the Laws of Australian Football and fair play, and behave accordingly.
- (d) Display and foster respect for Umpires, opponents, other Coaches, Administrators, Officials, Parents and Supporters.
- (e) Never to argue with or dispute a decision of an Official. If a Participant disagrees with a decision, they should deal with their dispute in accordance with the relevant Rules, Regulations, Policies and Determinations.
- (f) Control their emotions, and not engage in verbal abuse of or swearing at or in the vicinity of others, sledging Players and/or Coaches or behaviour that deliberately distracts or provokes an opponent.
- (g) Comply with the AFL and AFL NSW/ACT Rules and Regulations including the National Member Protection Policy, the League By-Laws and this Code of Conduct.
- (h) Never engage in any type of violence either on or off the field.
- (i) Contribute to a safe sporting environment and respectful culture which is accepting of individual differences and behave accordingly.
- (j) Cooperate with their Club Officials.
- (k) Participate for their own enjoyment and benefit and for the enjoyment and benefit of their team and Club Officials.
- (l) Comply with and observe the AFL Vilification and Discrimination Policy including respecting the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of gender, ability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion.
- (m) Not engage in conduct that is (in AFL NSW/ACT's reasonable opinion), unethical, unbecoming or likely to cause harm to the reputation of the Participant, the AFL, AFL NSW/ACT, the League, the Club or Australian Football.
- (n) Not take part in any form of bullying including via the use of social media.
- (o) Not make or post inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory comments in public, including via social media, about Players, Clubs, Umpires, Officials, the AFL, AFL NSW/ACT or the League. Social media includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, phone messages, digital images, website postings (including social media such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, websites and blogs).

(p) Use appropriately the facilities and equipment made available for administration, coaching, training, Competition Matches and events, including facilities provided by the opposing teams.

(q) Comply with and observe the AFL Anti-Doping Code and any relevant Illicit Drugs policies.

(r) Acknowledge that the AFL, or a body affiliated with the AFL, may take disciplinary action against me if I breach any part of this Code of Conduct. I understand that the AFL, or a body affiliated with the AFL, is required to implement a complaint handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice, in the event of an allegation against me.

NOTICE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

In the event of a formal report being made AFL NSW/ACT, AFL Sydney including via the Competition Management Committee, or the Conduct Committee may enforce the terms of this Code of Conduct and invoke the sanctions only if it has given the party alleged to have infringed this Code of Conduct:

- (i) reasonable details of the alleged infringement.
- (ii) notice of possible sanctions; and
- (iii) the opportunity to be heard in relation to the issues of infringement and sanction.

Any alleged breaches must be dealt with upon receipt of a written 'complaint' issued by:

- (i) An authorised Club Official on behalf of the Club and any of its members.
- (ii) The Competition Management Committee directly.
- (iii) Officiating Umpires (on Umpire Match Report Form).

Any alleged breach will be initially assessed by the Competition Management Committee. The League may in its absolute discretion taking into account all the available evidence either:

- (i) Commence the process in accordance with its code and, impose disciplinary sanctions thereafter, in its discretion.
- (ii) refer the matter to the Conduct Committee for determination in accordance with the National Disciplinary Tribunal Guidelines; or
- (iii) dismiss the complaint including determining such complaint to be frivolous.

Individuals and Clubs will be notified via their Club President (or delegate) in writing of any case to answer and the time and date of a convened hearing. Those requested to attend a hearing must attend or have a representative attend in their place.

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

Any breach or suspected breach of this code must be reported to the Pennant Hills AFC Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee will be made up of four persons as follows:



- (a) the president of the Pennant Hills AFC,
- (b) a member of the Pennant Hills AFC Management Committee,
- (c) a coaching representative as appointed by the Management Committee, and
- (d) a member of the Football Operations Department as appointed by the Management Committee.

Instances that involve other clubs reporting or citing a member of Pennant Hills Football Club will be dealt with as directed by the AFL Sydney tribunal. In such cases PHAFC will work with the AFL Sydney tribunal to ensure the behavior is fully addressed. Pennant Hills AFC reserves the right to deal separately if they feel warranted to protect the image of the club.

BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT

Any member, player, official or supporter who becomes aware of, or suspects, a breach of this code must report the breach, or suspected breach, to a member of the Disciplinary Committee.

That member of the Disciplinary Committee is then obligated to call a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee to deal with the breach or suspected breach.

Any other person can report a breach or suspected breach to either the Disciplinary Committee or the Pennant Hills AFC Management Committee.

RELEVANT CIRCUMSTANCES

When responding to issues involving a breach of this code the Disciplinary Committee of the Pennant Hills AFC may take into account the following circumstances:

- (a) Determination of AFL Sydney Tribunal if involved,
- (b) Any breaches of the law,
- (c) How aggrieved the recipient of the negative behaviour and their wishes,
- (d) Previous incidences involving the perpetrator,
- (e) relevant privacy issues; and
- (f) legal obligations.

The Disciplinary Committee may, at its sole discretion, consider any other factor it believes to be relevant when responding to an alleged breach of this code.

PROCESS

Upon the report of a suspected breach of this code to the Disciplinary Committee then the Disciplinary Committee shall call a hearing to determine the matter.

The structure of such a hearing will; be informal, be conducted in private and, adhere to the principles of due process and natural justice.

The Committee will make its determinations on the balance of probabilities.

The Disciplinary Committee, subject to due process and the rules of natural justice, is entitled to conduct the hearing in any manner it deems appropriate.



Once that report has been made, then the individual suspected of being involved in the behavior will be given the opportunity to appear before the Disciplinary Committee to take advice from the Committee as to their standing in the club, pending the results of any tribunal or club investigation.

If the person suspected of breaching this policy elects not to appear before the Disciplinary Committee, then they will be suspended from all participation within the Pennant Hills AFC until such time as they do appear before the Disciplinary Committee and the matter is determined.

The Pennant Hills AFC Disciplinary Committee can, at its discretion and at any time, refer any suspected unlawful activity directly to NSW Police if the Disciplinary Committee is of the view that, in the circumstances, such a referral is warranted or required by law.

In the case where a matter is referred to NSW Police for investigation then the alleged offender will be required to appear before the Disciplinary Committee to be advised as to their status in the club while the matter is under police investigation. Should the alleged offender elect not to appear before the Disciplinary Committee then they shall be suspended from all activity in relation to the Pennant Hills AFC until such time as they do appear before the Disciplinary Committee and the matter is determined.

SANCTIONS

If, in the opinion of Disciplinary Committee, the truth of a reported breach is substantiated on the balance of probabilities, then the Disciplinary Committee will apply a consequence it believes appropriate given the severity and circumstances of the particular case.

Such consequence may, where appropriate, include suspension from Pennant Hills AFC. The policy of the Pennant Hills AFC Management Committee, in relation to sanctions to be applied for a breach of this policy will usually be as follows:

- (a) first time – warning, reprimand, a written apology and reminder of the code to which they are bound.
- (b) second time – suspension for a designated time, counselling; and
- (c) third time – expulsion, removal of membership

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| <u>Pennant Hills AFC Inc.</u> | | Approval Date: | Jan 22 |
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| | | Version No: | 1 |
| President: | Sign: | Name: Todd Williams | |
| V President: | Sign: | Name: Ian Parker | |