



THE PENNANT HILLS AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB

VILIFICATION, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND SLEDGING POLICY

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. Our Club will provide a supportive culture that protects people against discrimination, bullying, sledging, harassment and vilification.

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 has an expectation that all players will at all times project themselves as positive mentors and role models when in the presence of junior players and when representing the AFL game in the broader community.

Policy Justification

The Australian Football League (AFL), State and Territory Bodies that are affiliated with the AFL (Affiliated State & Territory Bodies) and leagues and bodies that are affiliated with (or licensed by) Affiliated State & Territory Bodies (Community Bodies) are committed to fostering and maintaining a sporting environment which promotes understanding, accepts the unique differences of all persons affiliated with or interested in Australian Football, and recognises the need to prohibit certain discriminatory or vilifying conduct. This document establishes the means of redress for members who are aggrieved by what they reasonably consider to be vilification, discrimination, harassment, bullying or sledging (Policy).

THE POLICY

Preamble

Pennant Hills AFC are bound by the rules and regulations of our Affiliation with AFL Sydney and by applicable provisions of State-based legislation as well as the:

- a) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth);
- b) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth);
- c) Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth); and
- d) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (Legislation) 2021

This Policy is consistent with the 2021 AFL NSW/ACT Rules (specifically Rule 13.5) and the AFL NSW/ACT Code of Conduct and is not in substitution of, the Legislation.



This Policy is not in substitution of the AFL Rules & Regulations insofar as they apply to conduct within the scope of this Policy.

Nothing in this Policy prevents a person lodging a Complaint in relation to vilification or Discrimination under the Legislation. In the event a Complaint is made under this Policy the

Club shall ensure that the parties are informed of their rights

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

Any breach or suspected breach of this policy 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 player 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 BULLYING, SLEDGING AND VILIFICATION POLICY

Any member, player, official or supporter who becomes aware of, or suspects, a breach of this policy 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.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

No Player, Member, Spectator or Club Official shall engage in conduct which may reasonably be considered to incite hatred towards, contempt for, ridicule of or discrimination against a person or group of persons on the ground of their:

- race.
- religion.
- gender.
- colour;
- sexual preference, orientation, or identity; or
- special ability or disability.



(Vilification & Discrimination).

No Player, Member, Spectator or Club Official shall engage in conduct which may reasonably be considered to be offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening, or which is otherwise unwelcome and a reasonable person would recognise it as being unwelcome and likely to cause the recipient to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated

(Harassment).

No Player, Member, Spectator or Club Official shall use words or actions against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing. These actions are usually done by people who have more influence or power over someone else, or who want to make someone else feel less powerful or helpless. Bullying is not the same as conflict between people (like having a fight) or disliking someone, even though people might bully each other because of conflict or dislike. The following repeated behaviors' that can be considered bullying:

- Keeping someone out of a group (online or offline)
- Acting in an unpleasant way near or towards someone
- Giving nasty looks, making rude gestures, calling names, being rude and impolite, and constantly negative teasing.
- Spreading rumours or lies, or misrepresenting someone (i.e. using their Facebook account to post messages as if it were them)
- Mucking about that goes too far
- Harassing someone based on their race, sex, religion, gender or a disability
- Intentionally and repeatedly hurting someone physically
- Intentionally stalking someone
- Taking advantage of a position of power or rank to denigrate someone or put them down.

Bullying can happen anywhere. It can be in schools, at home, at work, in online social spaces, via text messaging or via email. It can be physical, verbal, emotional, and it also includes messages, public statements and behaviour online intended to cause distress or harm (also known as cyberbullying). But no matter what form bullying takes, the results can be the same: severe distress or pain for the person being bullied.

(Bullying)

No Player, Member, Spectator or Club Official shall engage in conduct which may reasonably be considered to be a devious practice whereby they seek to gain an advantage by deliberately insulting or verbally intimidating another. The purpose is to try to weaken the opponent's concentration, make them angry and thereby causing them to underperform or be more prone to error.

(Sledging)

RELEVANT CIRCUMSTANCES

When responding to issues involving Vilification, Discrimination, Bullying or Sledging 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 policy.

PROCESS

Upon the report of a suspected breach of this policy 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.

JUNIOR PLAYERS – (17 YEARS & UNDER)

When a breach, or suspected breach, of this policy involves a player who is 17 years of age or under, the Disciplinary Committee will liaise with the relevant parent or guardian, with the intent of agreeing on participation by the player in structured counseling or a mutually acceptable education program.



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 club policy;
- (b) second time – suspension for a designated time, counselling; and
- (c) third time – expulsion, removal of membership.

<u>Pennant Hills AFC Inc.</u>		Approval Date:	Jan 22
<u>Vilification, Discrimination, Harrassment, Bullying, and Sledging Policy</u>		Review Date:	
		Version No:	1
President:	Sign:	Name: Todd Williams	
V President:	Sign:	Name: Ian Parker	