



Discipline and Complaints Policy

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

The Lakeland District Soccer Association (LDSA) aims to provide a fun and positive experience for all participants. To this end, all spectators, parents, coaches, players, and other participants are always expected to foster this type of environment. Although, ideally, it won't be necessary; the following Discipline and Complaints policy exists as a backstop to enforce positivity and fun and discourage negative behaviour if it does occur.

The LDSA Discipline and Complaints Policy outlines and categorizes different infractions by degrees of severity and gives a brief outline of the penalties applied to each. Not all infractions may be listed specifically; however, infractions of similar intent will receive like suspensions.

The LDSA Discipline Committee will review reports received on a case-by-case basis and may reduce any fine or suspension which the individual(s) would otherwise receive, if the LDSA Discipline Committee, within reason, determines that the behavior of the individual(s) could be differently interpreted based on the evidence.

The Referee(s) exercise the powers granted by the IFAB Laws of the Game upon entering the field of play, its surrounding area, and extends to the time upon leaving the field of play and its surrounding area.

The decisions of the Referee(s) regarding details connected with play, including whether a goal scored is good and the results of the game are final. (This should be recognized when filing a protest, request for a hearing, or appeal).

LDSA Discipline Committee:

The LDSA Discipline Committee shall consist of the Discipline Chair (or executive member replacement) plus 2 other board Members (which may include district and community boards). One member will act as the recording secretary.

SECTION II – GENERAL

- I. Team Officials are responsible for the behavior and actions of their players and spectators at any soccer event.
- II. Any Misconduct Report from another District or Provincial Association received by LDSA shall be regarded as such and may be reviewed by the LDSA Discipline Committee. Any additional suspension(s) and/or fine(s) may be applied to the individual(s) as the LDSA Discipline Committee determines.
- III. The LDSA Discipline Committee will have the ability to review any complaint brought to its attention by whatever means and take necessary action if the evidence presented warrants this. All complaints must be in writing, using the Complaints Process, and signed with all parties identified when possible.
- IV. In the event of an abandoned game, the Referee(s) will keep both team's game sheets and forward these to the LDSA office. The LDSA Discipline Committee will review each incident and any Disciplinary action required will be sent out accordingly.
- V. All discipline applied will be served immediately. Discipline will not be altered except when determined by an appeal to the Discipline Committee using the Hearing process outlined in the LDSA Discipline and Complaints Policy.

SECTION III – JURISDICTION

- I. LDSA will have direct jurisdiction in the following circumstances:
 - Complaints or inquiries referred to LDSA by any other District Association
 - Misconduct by any person(s) arising from participation in any LDSA program
 - Misconduct by any person(s) arising from participation at any tournament competition(s)
 - Misconduct by any Member of LDSA
 - Misconduct arising from any soccer event, whether it be within Canada or Internationally, where LDSA and ASA have given prior permission to participate
- II. Any other matter, not listed above, which is directly related to LDSA.
- III. All cases of misconduct, involving an alleged physical assault, attempted physical assault or threatening behavior toward a Referee(s) by any person(s), shall be reported by the referee and dealt with directly by ASA through an ASA Discipline Hearing unless ASA directs otherwise.

SECTION IV – TIMELINES AND NOTICES

I. GENERAL

- a) The Referee's ASA Misconduct Report is to be forwarded to LDSA within 48 hours of the incident, along with copies of the game sheets.
- b) Upon receiving an ASA Misconduct Report from the Referee(s), LDSA Discipline Committee will review the misconduct report and email an LDSA discipline report to the individual(s) involved and the Team Official(s) stating the outcome. This report will be sent out within 3 business days of receiving the Referee's Misconduct Report.
- c) LDSA may set further terms of punishment for non-compliance.

SECTION V – OFFENCES

I. GENERAL

- a) Any player, Team Official or spectator who is dismissed by the Referee(s) from an LDSA game, must leave the field of play and area immediately without retrieving their belongings.
- b) The severity of the offence and any history of the individual(s) may result in an increase in the suspension(s) or penalties administered by the LDSA Discipline Committee.
- c) Penalties assessed to Team Officials can result in up to 2 times the listed penalty indicated on the discipline report, at the discretion of the LDSA Discipline Committee.
- d) Any Dismissal related to the Referee that involves a Youth Referee between the ages of 12-18 (inclusive) will result in 2 times the listed penalty.
- e) The Referee is NOT required to dismiss the person(s) from the game, for LDSA Discipline Committee to review the issue.

II. Cautions (Yellow Cards)

- a) The following suspension(s) for accumulation of caution cards during a season shall be automatic:

3 Cautions	1 game suspension
Additional 2 Cautions	2 game suspension
Additional 2 Cautions	4 game suspension & Automatic Discipline Hearing

- Accumulation of caution cards during a season do not carry over to Lakeland Cup.

- b) Team Official(s) for each team are responsible for tracking caution cards received by the players who are registered to their team during the season. Once a player has accumulated 3, 5 or 7 caution cards during a current season, the player MUST sit out their next scheduled league game(s).
- c) Caution cards received by a player when playing up with another team will count towards the player's overall accumulation of caution cards during a season. When a player received two caution cards during one game, these will not count towards the player's overall accumulation of caution cards during the season, as it is dealt with as a separate offence and will result in the player receiving an automatic Red Card for the offence.

III. Offences, Including Ejections (Red Cards)

The following list of offences may apply to players, team officials, spectators, or other participants. Unless specifically stated here, the Referee is NOT required to dismiss the person(s) for the LDSA Discipline Committee to review the issue.

- a) Denying a Goal or a Goal Scoring Opportunity (as deemed by the Referee)

First Offence	1 game suspension
Second Offence	2 game suspension

- b) Receives a Second Caution in the same Match

First Offence	1 game suspension
Second Offence	3 game suspension

- c) Offensive, Insulting or Abusive Language and/or Gestures

First Offence	2 game suspension
Second Offence	4 game suspension

- d) Dangerous Tackle or Tackle from Behind

First Offence	1 – 2 game suspension
Second Offence	3 – 4 game suspension

- e) Pushing or Charging

First Offence	1 – 2 game suspension
Second Offence	3 – 4 game suspension

f) Gesture or Attempt to Strike, Kick or Trip

First Offence	1 – 2 game suspension
Second Offence	3 – 4 game suspension

g) Striking, Kicking or Tripping (with intent)

First Offence	2 – 3 game suspension
Second Offence	4 – 6 game suspension

h) Throwing an Object in the Direction of an Opponent

First Offence	2 – 3 game suspension
Second Offence	4 – 6 game suspension

i) Bite, Scratch or Gouge an Opponent

First Offence	2 – 3 game suspension
Second Offence	4 – 6 game suspension

j) Boarding (Indoor Only)

First Offence	1 – 2 game suspension
Second Offence	3 – 4 game suspension

k) Violent Conduct: Fighting

First Offence	4 game suspension
Second Offence	Automatic Discipline Hearing

l) Spitting at Anyone

First Offence	4 game suspension
Second Offence	Automatic Discipline Hearing

m) Violent Conduct: Head Butting (Automatic Discipline Hearing)

First Offence	4 game suspension
Second Offence	16 game suspension

n) Offensive, Insulting or Abusive Language and/or Gestures against a Referee

First Offence	4 game suspension
Second Offence	Automatic Discipline Hearing

- o) Failure to Conduct Themselves in a Responsible Manner: Any act or statement, physical or verbal, which is considered insulting, or improper behavior could be seen as conduct likely to bring the game into disrepute.

All Offences	LDSA Discipline Committee will review on a case-by-case basis
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- p) Failure to Leave the Field Upon Dismissal, including continuing to be disruptive

All Offences	May result in additional suspension added and possibly an appearance before the LDSA Discipline Committee
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- q) Continuing to Dispute the decision of the Referee

All Offences	May result in additional suspension added and possibly an appearance before the LDSA Discipline Committee
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IV. Abusive and Threatening Behaviour

- a) Referees may dismiss any Team Official(s) or spectator(s) who are treating them or any other person in an unacceptable manner. If the behaviour continues the Referee may abandon the game and forward an ASA Misconduct Report to LDSA within 48 hours following the incident.
- b) Incidents will be reviewed and dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Discipline Committee.

V. Racism and Harassment

- a) Anyone who publicly disparages or discriminates against someone in a defamatory manner of race, language, religion, ethnic origins, gender, sexuality, or other discrimination will be brought before the LDSA Discipline Committee to answer to the charge of conduct likely to bring the game into disrepute.
- b) The Association does not tolerate or condone any degree of harassment by anyone associated with the Association. It is the responsibility of all directors, staff, and members, to promote harassment free environments.

VI. Additional Suspension

- a) Individuals identified as a Team Official, that Team Official (and possibly their child(ren)) may be suspended from all soccer activity for the remainder of the soccer season or longer and may be requested to attend a LDSA Discipline Hearing.
- b) Individuals identified as a Parent/Guardian of one of the registered LDSA players, that parent and possibly their child(ren)) may be suspended from all soccer activity for the remainder of the soccer season or longer and may be requested to attend an LDSA Discipline Hearing.
- c) Participating in any Soccer activity while under suspension or actions deemed to be conduct likely to bring the game into disrepute could result in the following:

First Offence	Up to 1 year ban from all Soccer Activity
Second Offence	Up to 5 year ban from all Soccer Activity
Third Offence	Up to a Lifetime ban from all Soccer Activity

SECTION VI – SERVING OF SUSPENSIONS

I. General

- a) Suspensions will be served during the current LDSA season, and any suspension(s) not served in full will be carried over to the following season, be it indoor or outdoor.

II. Players

- a) All registered players who receive suspensions, must serve their suspension with the team they are currently registered with at the time. Players will not be eligible to be a guest player for any team until their suspension has been fully served with the team they are registered with.

III. Team Officials

- a) All registered Team Officials who receive suspensions, must serve their suspension with the team they received the suspension with. Team Officials will not be eligible to be on the bench with any other team(s), for any LDSA events until their suspension has been fully served with the team, they received the suspension with.

IV. Parents/Guardians/Spectators

- a) Parents/Guardians/Spectators who receive suspensions, the suspension will be based on the length of time and not by game, and administered accordingly:

Game Suspension	Length of Suspension
2 game suspension	2 week suspension
4 game suspension	4 week suspension
8 game suspension	8 week suspension

SECTION VII – DISCIPLINE APPEAL AND HEARINGS

I. General

- a) Any player(s) or Team Official(s) under the jurisdiction of LDSA having received a discipline report may appeal for a Discipline Hearing through their Team Official within 3 days of receiving the discipline report (accompanied by a \$50 administrative fee). The request from the Team Official must identify the reason for requesting the Discipline Hearing. If the request does not include a sufficient reason or any indication that new evidence will be available, the hearing will be immediately denied. If the decision of the LDSA Discipline Committee is to decrease the suspension from its original decision, the administrative fee will be refunded in full. If the decision of the LDSA Discipline Committee is not to change its original decision or increase the suspension following the hearing, the administrative fee will be non-refundable.
- b) Should LDSA initiate a mandatory Discipline Hearing, any individual(s) or Team Officials involved will be given a minimum of 5 business days written notice of the scheduled Discipline Hearing date. The Discipline Hearing Notice shall be sent to the individual(s) involved and Team Official(s). Any person(s) directly involved with the incident(s)/event(s) under investigation whose attendance is requested to attend the Discipline Hearing, is required by the LDSA Discipline Committee to make every effort possible to attend. Only those people requested or approved to appear at the hearing may attend.
- c) Any request for a postponement of a scheduled Discipline Hearing by LDSA must be received by LDSA Discipline Committee through the Team Official, a minimum of 2 business days prior to the date of the scheduled Discipline Hearing (accompanied by an additional \$50 administrative fee). The postponement will only be granted under reasonable circumstances at the sole discretion of the LDSA Discipline Committee.

- d) Any individual(s) who is requested by the LDSA Discipline Committee to attend a Discipline Hearing or has been granted a Discipline Hearing upon their own request by their Team Official but fails to attend the Hearing and fails to show sufficient cause acceptable to the LDSA Discipline Committee for missing the scheduled Discipline Hearing, forfeits their right to a new Hearing or Appeal. At the discretion of the LDSA Discipline Committee, the Hearing may proceed without the individual(s) present, and the Committee may determine the outcome based on the information available at that time.
- e) LDSA will notify, in writing through email, the LDSA Discipline Committee's determination, to the individual(s) involved and Team Official(s), within 2 business days following the LDSA Discipline Hearing.
- f) In all cases where the individual(s) has been charged in a Criminal Court, Civil Court or litigation has originated due to any soccer activity incidents, the LDSA Discipline Committee will not hold a Discipline Hearing until such time that the charges have been dealt with and the case has been closed. Once complete, the LDSA Discipline Committee will decide if further sanctions are warranted and will proceed pursuant to the Rules and Regulation here within.
- g) The individual(s) may be accompanied by legal council only with prior written notice sent to the LDSA Discipline Committee. LDSA reserves the right to also be accompanied by legal council. Timelines may be adjusted to accommodate.
- h) An ASA Misconduct Report completed by the Referee(s) and forwarded to the LDSA office for review, shall be regarded as the Referee(s) affidavit to an LDSA Discipline Hearing.

II. Appeal Process

- a) Appeals must be submitted in writing to the LDSA Discipline Committee (accompanied by a \$50 administrative fee), no later than 3 days from the date of the LDSA discipline report.
- b) Appeals must state the grounds of the violation of the LDSA Code of Conduct and Ethics, LDSA Discipline and Complaints Policy or LDSA By-laws, as well as a sufficient reason and indication of evidence justifying the appeal.
- c) The Discipline Committee will give a written reply within 5 business days of receiving the documentation. This written reply will either deny the appeal or will indicate details of a Hearing.
- d) Should the Discipline Committee believe that the Appeal documentation may hold merit, they shall at that time, arrange to schedule an Appeals Hearing within 14 business days of acceptance of the appeal.
- e) Suspension(s) or Decision(s) by the LDSA Discipline Committee will remain in effect until the decision of the Hearing is communicated in writing by LDSA, or otherwise provided herein.

III. Hearing Protocol

All Discipline Hearings held within the LDSA jurisdiction shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

- a) The LDSA Discipline Committee shall consist of the Discipline Chair (or executive member replacement) plus 2 other board Members (which may include district and community boards). One member will act as the recording secretary.
- b) The individual(s) may have up to and not exceeding, 3 people present at the Discipline Hearing (including themselves). If the individual(s) is a minor, they must be accompanied by an adult. The LDSA Discipline Committee must be informed of and approve all attendees prior to the hearing.
- c) The individual(s) may provide witness statements of the incident, in writing a minimum of 24 hours prior to the Discipline Hearing.
- d) LDSA may grant a postponement of any Discipline Hearing if reason(s) for the postponement are reasonable.

IV. Hearing Procedure

LDSA will proceed with a Discipline Hearing, once all members/individuals are present, as follows:

- a) The LDSA Discipline Committee Chair will introduce the Discipline Committee Members.
- b) The LDSA Discipline Committee Chair will read aloud the ASA Misconduct Report provided to LDSA by the Referee or the complaints/concerns sent into LDSA.
- c) The individual(s) will be provided the opportunity to give their account of the incident(s) which took place and ask the LDSA Discipline Committee any relevant question(s) pertaining to the report or complaints or concerns.
- d) The LDSA Discipline Committee Members will have the opportunity to ask the individual(s) any question(s) they may need answered which are relevant to the report or the complaints/concerns.
- e) The individual(s) will be excused from the Discipline Hearing, the LDSA Discipline Committee will review the documentation and all evidence provided by the individual(s) and render a decision prior to adjourning.
- f) The individual(s) will be notified by the LDSA, in writing through email, of the decision of the LDSA Discipline Committee within 2 business days of the Discipline Hearing.

V. Hearing Outcome

- a) On any misconduct proved to its satisfaction, the LDSA Discipline Committee will have at its discretion, the authority to:
 - Suspend the individual(s) for a specific number of scheduled games in a designated league or competition over and above the minimum stated herein
 - Default any game(s) that the individual(s) may have participated in
- b) In serious or extreme cases, the LDSA Discipline Committee will have at its discretion, the authority to:
 - Suspend the individual(s) from any and all soccer activity, either permanently, indefinitely or for a specified period of time.
 - Have the individual(s) pay all expense(s) of the LDSA Discipline Committee related to any hearing.

Complaints Process:

The Lakeland District Soccer Association takes the concerns of our members seriously and want to allow for the opportunity to address those concerns.

Should you have a concern with another member/staff member we require the following process to be followed:

1. Address your concerns directly with the person/people your concerns are with (ie: coach, parent, spectator).
2. Address your concerns to the Director in charge of your community program.
3. Submit a Complaint Form to the executive of your community.
4. Submit a Complaint Form to the district Executive Director.

Complaint Forms may be submitted by coaches, managers, parents/guardians and/or spectators. Prior to submitting the Complaint Forms, please ensure you have followed the steps as given above.

The Lakeland District Soccer Association will review each complaint and will follow up with consideration given to the LDSA Code of Conducts and Ethics and the LDSA Discipline and Complaints Policy. Each complaint will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

The review process will consist of the following:

1. Follow up with all parties within the complaint.
2. Review of history of all parties within the complaint, if any.
3. Address concerns as required based on review and severity of the concerns.
4. Escalate complaint to Discipline Chair as required.

The Discipline Chair will review the complaint further and will follow up with consideration given to the, LDSA Code of Conducts and Ethics and the LDSA Discipline and Complaints Policy and act within its authority.

