



Newfoundland and Labrador Soccer Association

Disciplinary Code

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Chapter I Introduction

I. Definitions

For the purpose of the NLSA *Disciplinary Code (NLSADC)*, the terms set out below are defined as follows:

1. **Association** means the Newfoundland and Labrador Soccer Association (NLSA).
2. **Canada Soccer** means the Canadian Soccer Association.
3. **Region** means an area of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador as outlined in Article 8 of the NLSA By-Laws.
4. **Club** means a Member of a soccer (football) Association.
5. **Appeals Panel** is a duly constituted panel who are appointed from the Judicial Body to adjudicate appeals in accordance with the NLSA's Rules and Regulations and Policies; One of the three persons shall be appointed Chair of the Panel.
6. **Discipline Panel** is a duly constituted panel who are appointed from the Judicial Body to adjudicate disciplinary matters in accordance with the NLSA Rules and Regulations and Policies; One of the three persons shall be appointed Chair of the Panel.
7. **Ethics Panel** is a duly constituted panel consisting of a minimum of three persons who are appointed from the Judicial Body to investigate matters of conduct and ethics in accordance with the NLSA's Rules and Regulations and Policies; One of the three persons shall be appointed Chair of the Panel.
8. **Friendly Match** means a match organized by a soccer association, club or other person between teams chosen for the occasion and possibly belonging to different spheres of operation; the score has an effect only on the match or tournament in question and, in the case of representative teams, on the FIFA rankings.
9. **International Match** means a match between two (2) teams belonging to different national associations (two (2) clubs, one (1) club and one (1) representative team or two (2) representative teams).
10. **Competition Match** means a match between two (2) teams registered with Provincial/Territorial Associations. This applies to duly sanctioned matches in Leagues, Cup Competitions and Tournaments.
11. **Judicial Body** means one of the following panels of the NLSA: (i) the Disciplinary Panel; (ii) the Appeals Panel; (iii) the Ethics Panel; and all of them together shall be known as the Judicial Bodies.
12. **Match** shall mean any Friendly Match; International Match or Competition Match.

13. **Match Official** means the referee, assistant referees, fourth official, match commissioner, referee inspector/assessor, the person in charge of safety, and other persons appointed by the NLSA to assume responsibility in connection with a match.
14. **Official Match** means a match organized under the auspices of the NLSA or one of the Regions for all of the teams or Clubs in its sphere of jurisdiction; the score has an effect on the rights of participation in other competitions unless the regulations in question stipulate otherwise.
15. **Official** means anyone, with the exception of players, performing an activity connected with soccer at an Association or Club, regardless of title, the type of activity (administrative, sporting or any other) and the duration of the activity. It includes all Directors, Officers, committee members, coaches, trainers, Match Officials, diversity officers, persons in charge of safety, and any other person responsible for technical, medical and/or administrative matters in the NLSA , its Members, Clubs or Leagues, as well as all other persons obliged to comply with the NLSA By-laws.
16. **Chair** means the person appointed to be in charge of a Hearing.
17. **Post-match** means the time between the final whistle from the referee and the teams departure from the confines of the stadium/field.
18. **Pre-match** means the time between the teams' arrival in the confines of the stadium/field and the whistle for kickoff from the referee.
19. **Business Days** Monday to Friday, excluding Holidays observed by the NLSA office.
20. **Stadium** means an area of land on which sports are played. Its perimeter is defined and it may include structures which houses change rooms, a club house, administrative offices, or similar and rows of seats or standing areas surrounding or partially surrounding the playing surface.
21. **Statutory Objectives** means any one or all of the following: *FIFA Statutes*, *CONCACAF Statutes*, *FIFA Laws of the Game*, *Canada Soccer By-Laws*, *NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics*, *NLSA By-Laws*, Association directives and policies currently in force, Circulars issued by FIFA, CONCACAF and Canada Soccer, and competition regulations issued by the NLSA.

Terms not defined herein shall have the meaning ascribed to them in the *NLSA By-laws*, as amended from time to time.

II Purpose

The NLSADC:

1. Specifies the organization, procedures and functions of the Judicial Bodies of the NLSA;
2. Describes the disciplinary processes the NLSA will follow when the FIFA Laws of the Game, NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics, NLSA Rules and Regulations, Canadian Anti-Doping Policy, FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations and any/all Canada Soccer and NLSA Competition Regulations are breached; and
3. Specifies the disciplinary measures or sanctions that may be imposed.

Where there are any discrepancies between this document and the Canada Soccer *Disciplinary Code*, the Canada Soccer *Disciplinary Code* will take precedence.

III Scope of Application

1. The *NLSADC* applies to all categories of membership defined in Article 7 of the NLSA By-Laws and to Officials, players and individuals employed or engaged by the NLSA. The Code also applies to the Directors of the NLSA, League Members or any other individuals who perform duties on behalf of these Members when the Members are engaged in soccer-related activities, whether on or off field, sanctioned by the NLSA.
2. This *NLSADC* applies to every match and competition organized by the NLSA or its Members and to breaches of the FIFA *Laws of the Game*, the NLSA *By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, Code of Conduct and Ethics* and policies and directives in force. It also applies to any breach of the NLSA *By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics* and policies that do not fall under the jurisdiction of any other body.
3. Infringements are punishable regardless of whether they have been committed deliberately or negligently and regardless of whether one is the instigator or an accomplice.
4. The *NLSADC* applies to facts that have arisen after the *NLSADC* has come into force.
5. Terms referring to natural persons are applicable to all genders. Any term in the singular applies to the plural and vice-versa.

IV. Member Association Disciplinary Codes

The sanctions outlined in the *NLSADC* represent the minimum sanctions that may be imposed by the NLSA or any Region within its boundaries. Regions shall not incorporate sanctions within their own disciplinary rules and/or regulations that fall below those specified in the *NLSADC*.

V. Jurisdiction

1. Any person or organization reported for misconduct and all allegations of misconduct involving any of the following shall be dealt with by a Judicial Body of the NLSA except as otherwise stated herein:
 - a. All cases of misconduct toward any game official by any person involving alleged physical or verbal assault; attempted physical assault or threatening behavior;
 - b. All cases of misconduct toward any person by a game official or team staff involving alleged physical assault; attempted physical assault or threatening behavior;
 - c. Misconduct involving violent conduct or serious foul play requiring a hearing when the reportable incident also includes a charge under paragraph (a);
 - d. Misconduct involving racist or sexist comments.

- e. Complaints or enquiries referred to it by Canada Soccer;
 - f. Complaints or enquiries referred to it by another Provincial/Territorial Association;
 - g. Misconduct by any person arising from participation in the NLSA's Provincial Teams Program;
 - h. Misconduct by a Region or league, or any of their officers and officials;
 - i. Misconduct in Leagues or competitions sanctioned and/or organized by the NLSA;
 - j. Misconduct at any NLSA Provincial Competition or Jamboree;
 - k. Misconduct arising at any Regional, National match or event where participation is given prior approval by the NLSA;
 - l. Any other matter directly related to the NLSA which NLSA, in its sole discretion, choose to handle.
2. All alleged offenses and violations of the Laws of the Game, the NLSA rules and Regulations and policies or misconduct by any of their Clubs, players, Officials or members, other than those listed above in #1, may be dealt with by the Region or League in whose jurisdiction the alleged offence took place.
 3. In Provincial Leagues all alleged offenses and violation of the Laws of the Game, the NLSA Rules and Regulations and Policies or misconduct by any of the clubs, players, Officials or members, other than those listed above in #1, will be dealt with by the NLSA Provincial League Discipline Committee.
 4. In Provincial Tournaments and Jamborees all alleged offenses and violation of the Laws of the Game, the NLSA Rules and Regulations and Policies or misconduct by any of the clubs, players, Officials or members, other than those listed above in #1, will be dealt with the Tournament /Jamboree Discipline Committee.
 5. Regions and Sanctioned Leagues shall ensure that their disciplinary rules, regulations, and procedures are consistent with those of the NLSA and any discipline hearing shall be conducted in accordance with these rules and regulations.
 6. In all cases, the parties concerned shall have the right to appear, in person or by electronic means, and make statements at a hearing.
 7. Every Club is responsible for the actions of its players, Officials and spectators. Players, Officials, and spectators may only take part in or attend games on condition that they observe the NLSA's Rules and Regulations and policies.
 8. Every Club and League is required to take all precautions necessary to prevent its players, Officials, and spectators from threatening or assaulting anyone at games, especially the referee and assistant referees. Clubs and Leagues are expected to provide security for players and Match Officials.
 9. Every Club and League is required to take all precautions necessary to prevent match manipulations.
 10. The NLSA, in its sole discretion, may delegate its jurisdiction to a Region or League.

VI. Decisions of the Referee

1. Decisions taken by the referee on the field of play are final and may not be reviewed by the Canada Soccer Judicial Bodies.
2. In cases where a decision by the referee involves an obvious error (such as mistaking the identity of the person penalized), the Judicial Bodies may only review the disciplinary consequences of that decision. In cases of mistaken identity, disciplinary proceedings may, in accordance with this Code, be opened only against the person who was actually at fault.
3. A protest against a caution or a sending-off from the field of play after two cautions is admissible only if the referee's error was to mistake the identity of the player.
4. In cases of serious misconduct, disciplinary action may be taken even if the referee and his assistants did not see the event in question and were therefore unable to take any action.

VII. Misconduct

1. In addition to any/all matters referred to in any of the NLSA's *Rules and Regulations* or policies, it shall be deemed misconduct if any individual, person, entity or organization has, in the judgment of a Discipline Hearing Panel or Committee following a hearing of that Panel or Committee, committed any of the following offenses:
 - a. Violated the *Laws of the Game*, the *NLSA Rules and Regulations*, or the rules, regulations or policies of a Region or League;
 - b. Bet on any game, match or NLSA sanctioned event, other than as permitted in accordance with provincial, federal or international law;
 - c. Offered or accepted, with a view to influencing the result of a game, consideration to or from any Region, Club, League, player, team official, or Match Official;
 - d. Criminal misconduct or human rights abuse; or
 - e. Any act or statement, verbally or in writing, which is considered to be inappropriate, unsporting, insulting, or improper behaviour or is likely to bring the game into disrepute.
2. Anyone who, in soccer-related activities, forges a document, falsifies an authentic document or uses a forged or falsified document to purposely deceive will be sanctioned with a fine:
 - a. If the perpetrator is a player, a suspension of at least six (6) matches will also be pronounced.
 - b. If the perpetrator is an Official or an intermediary, a ban on taking part in any soccer-related activity for a period of at least twelve (12) months will also be pronounced.
 - c. A Region may be held liable for an infringement as defined in subsection (a) committed by one of its Officials and/or players. In such a case, an expulsion from a competition may be pronounced in addition to a fine for the Region concerned.

- d. A Club may be held liable for an infringement as defined in subsection (a) committed by one of its Officials and/or players. In such a case, an expulsion from a competition and/or a transfer ban may be pronounced in addition to a fine for the Club concerned.

VIII. Membership Consequences

1. When a Region, League, Club, player, Official or member is sanctioned, the NLSA Board of Directors will apply any subsequent action in respect to the offending Region, League, Club, player, Official or member in relation to their membership or connection with the NLSA.
2. No suspended player or member of any such Region, League, or Club so suspended or removed from the NLSA shall be eligible for membership in any other Region, League, or Club belonging to, or under the jurisdiction of, the NLSA.

Chapter 2 The Disciplinary Process

General Principles

I. Independence

1. The Judicial Bodies make their decisions entirely independently. They shall not receive instructions from any other Judicial Body, and a member of another Judicial Body may not stay in the meeting room during the Judicial Bodies' deliberations unless they have been explicitly summoned to attend.
2. An individual who serves on a Judicial Body may not at the same time be a Director or serve on any other committee of the NLSA.
3. An individual may not serve on a Judicial Body if that individual or an immediate family member is either employed or contracted by, or holds any other official position at, the NLSA.

II. Confidentiality

1. Members of the Judicial Bodies shall ensure that everything disclosed to them during the course of their work, including but not limited to the facts of the case, the content of their deliberations, and the decisions taken, remain confidential.
2. The content of written decisions provided to addressees may subsequently be made public at the discretion of the NLSA.

III. Conflict of Interest

1. Members of the Judicial Bodies must decline to participate in any meeting concerning a matter in which they are in a real or perceived conflict of interest. Such instances include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. if the member in question has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter
 - b. if the member is associated with any of the parties; or
 - c. if the member has already dealt with the case under different circumstances.
2. Members of the Judicial Bodies who decline to participate in a meeting on any of the above grounds shall notify the Chair of the Panel immediately.
3. The parties subject to any proceeding with the Judicial Bodies may also raise an objection to a member of a Judicial Body hearing the case whom they believe to be biased. The Chair of the applicable Judicial Body Panel shall decide on any such claim of bias. The Chair's decision shall be final and binding
4. Proceedings that have involved someone whom the Chair of the Panel has ordered not to participate will be considered null and void.

IV. Closed Proceedings

- 1 Proceedings of any Judicial Body may be closed if:
 - a. All parties involved in the proceedings reach agreement

- b. A party declares bankruptcy; or
- c. The proceedings become baseless in the discretion of the Judicial Panel in their sole discretion.

V. Sanctions Common to both Natural and Legal Persons

Both natural and legal persons are punishable by each, or a combination of, the following sanctions at the discretion of the Judicial Body hearing the case:

1. Warning
 - a. A warning is a reminder of the substance of a disciplinary rule allied with the threat of a sanction in the event of a further infringement.
2. Reprimand
 - a. A reprimand is an official written pronouncement of disapproval sent to the perpetrator of an infringement.
3. Fine
 - a. Judicial Bodies may impose monetary sanctions based on the minimum standards outlined in Annex A. These minimum fines may be increased based on the weight of evidence presented in the case.
 - b. The Judicial Body that imposes the fine decides the terms and time limits for payment.
 - c. Regions are jointly liable for fines imposed on representative team players and Officials. The same applies to Clubs in respect of their players and Officials. The fact that a natural person has left a Club or Association does not cancel out joint liability
4. Suspension
 - a. Judicial Bodies may impose a suspension, in addition to the mandatory minimum suspension outlined in Annex A, for a specific number of games, length of time or from all soccer related activity based on the weight of evidence presented in the case.
5. Return of Awards
 - a. The person required to return an award shall return the benefits received, and in particular sums of money and symbolic objects (medal, trophy).

VI. Failure to Respect Decisions

1. Any financial or non-financial decision that has been pronounced against a natural person by a Judicial Body, duly recognized by the NLSA, shall be enforced by the Region of the Judicial Body that has pronounced the decision or by the natural person's new Region if the natural person has in the meantime registered (or otherwise signed a contract in the case of a coach) with a Club affiliated with another Region, in accordance with the principles established in Section V above and in compliance with the applicable disciplinary regulations.
2. Any financial or non-financial decision that has been pronounced against a Club or a Member of the NLSA by a Judicial Body, duly recognized by the NLSA, shall be enforced by the Region of the Judicial Body that has pronounced the decision in accordance with the principles established in Section V above and in compliance with the applicable disciplinary regulations.

VII. Information Reporting Requirements

1. Regions and other sport organizations shall notify the Judicial Bodies of the NLSA of any serious violations of the NLSA's Statutory Objectives.
2. Any disciplinary action to be taken at a Friendly Match between two (2) representative teams from different Regions is the responsibility of the organization to which the sanctioned player belongs. However, in serious cases, the NLSA Judicial Body may intervene in the case. The Region shall inform the NLSA of the sanctions pronounced.
3. Regions and Leagues shall include, with all decisions, a notice that indicates the following information:
 - a. Regional rules regarding appeals;
 - b. Regional address where the appeal is to be lodged;
 - c. Method of payment and amount of fee;
 - d. Statement of fact document; and
 - e. Decisions which may be appealed to the NLSA.

Administration

VIII. Costs

1. Costs shall be paid by the unsuccessful party.
2. If there is no unsuccessful party, costs shall be borne by the Region hearing the case.
3. If considered fair to do so, costs may be split among several parties.
4. The Chair of the Panel hearing the case may, in exceptional circumstances, decide to curtail or dispense with costs and expenses.
5. No procedural compensation shall be awarded in proceedings of the Disciplinary and Appeal Panels.
6. Any cost incurred by applications for leave to appeal that are deemed baseless shall be paid by the appellant.

IX. Timelines

1. Time limits referred to herein begin the day following the receipt of relevant documents.
2. Time limits to which other persons must adhere commence four (4) days after a document has been delivered by the NLSA.

3. If the last day of the time limit coincides with a public holiday the time limit will expire on the next day.
4. Documents must be sent to the relevant Judicial Body no later than midnight on the last day of the time limit.
5. If the document is sent electronically, the document must be sent to the Judicial Body before midnight on the last day of the time limit.
6. In the case of appeals, the deposit demanded is considered to have been paid in time if the payment is received by the NLSA by midnight on the last day of the time limit.
7. Time limits are suspended from December 24 to January 2 inclusive and during the period beginning two (2) days before the Annual Meeting of the Members of the NLSA and ending two (2) days after that meeting.
8. Time limits established in the *NLSADC* may not be extended.
9. Time limits established by the Chair of a Judicial Panel may be extended but never more than twice.

X Liability

1. Except in the case of gross negligence, neither the members of the Judicial Bodies of the NLSA, its employees nor the Directors may be made found liable for any deeds or omissions relating to any disciplinary or appeal procedure.

XI. Language

1. The primary language to be used in proceedings is English.
2. The NLSA may, if necessary, use the services of an interpreter.
3. All decisions rendered will be published in English.

XII. Limitation Period for Prosecution

1. Infringements committed during a match may no longer be prosecuted after a lapse of two years. As a general rule, other infringements may not be prosecuted after a lapse of ten years.
2. Anti-doping violations may not be prosecuted after ten (10) years have elapsed.
3. Prosecution for corruption is not subject to a limitation period from the NLSA.
4. The limitation period commences on the day on which the perpetrator committed the infringement, if the infringement is recurrent, from the day on which the most recent infringement was committed, and if the infringement lasted a certain period, from the day on which it ended.

5. The limitation period is interrupted if the Disciplinary Panel commences proceedings before it has expired.

XIII. Limitation Period for the Enforcement of Sanctions

1. The limitation period for the enforcement of sanctions is five (5) years.
2. The limitation period begins on the day on which the decision comes into force.

The Process

XIV. Making a Complaint

1. Any person may file a report where that person believes conduct has taken place that is incompatible with the NLSA *By-Laws*, *NLSA Rules and Regulations*, and/or *NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics*. The Report is to be made in writing and sent to discipline@nlsa.ca where it will be accessed by an independent case manager and assigned in accordance with Section XV below.
2. Referees are to submit a match report form and are to report all misconduct by players who receive a caution or who are sent from the field of play together with any other infractions or incidents which they observe when officiating. Other Match Officials appointed to a game are to report on infringements observed by them. Reports are to be submitted in writing to the NLSA Representative, where appointed, or in accordance with the Competition Regulations.
3. A complainant and/or respondent may apply to the NLSA for leave to appeal a decision rendered on completion of the Regional Association discipline and appeal process that involve an interpretation or breach of the *NLSA Rules and Regulations* and policies or the policies or regulations of the Regional Association or League, unless the disciplinary sanction pronounced is:
 - a. a warning;
 - b. a reprimand;
 - c. a suspension for fewer than three (3) matches or of up to two (2) months;
 - d. a fine of up to \$5,000 imposed on a Regional Association or a Club or of up to \$750 in other cases;
 - e. decisions passed in compliance with the *NLSADC*; or
 - f. decisions passed in compliance with the NLSA or Regional Association competition regulations and/or regulations where such decisions are final and binding.
4. A complainant and/or respondent may apply to the NLSA for leave to appeal decisions taken by the NLSA under the provision of the *NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics* that involve only an interpretation or a breach of that policy.
5. An appeal may be lodged with the Appeals Committee against any decision rendered by the NLSA Judicial Bodies, unless the disciplinary sanction pronounced is:
 - a. a warning;

- b. a reprimand;
- c. a suspension for fewer than three (3) matches or of up to two (2) months;
- d. a fine of up to \$5,000 imposed on a Regional Association or a Club or of up to \$750 in other cases;
- e. decisions passed in compliance with the *NLSADC*; or
- f. decisions passed in compliance with the NLSA or Regional Association competition regulations and/or regulations where such decisions are final and binding.

XV. Assignment of a Complaint to a Judicial Body

1. Within five (5) days of receipt, a complaint shall be assigned to the appropriate Judicial Body as follows:
 - a. A complaint regarding conduct that violates the *NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics* shall be referred for investigation to an NLSA Ethics Panel.
 - b. All other complaints shall be referred to an NLSA Disciplinary Panel.
2. In all cases of alleged physical assault, attempted physical assault, or threatening behavior toward a game official, the accused shall be suspended from all soccer activities from the date of the alleged incident until a hearing has been held and the case has been decided.
3. In all cases where a person has been charged with a Criminal Code of Canada offence(s), the accused shall be suspended from all soccer activities until the case has been concluded in the Criminal Court, and if necessary, a hearing has been held and the case has been decided.
4. Individuals who have been the direct addressee of potential discriminatory behaviour may be invited by the respective judicial body to make an oral or written victim impact statement

XVI. Ethics Panel

1. The Ethics Panel is an investigative body of the NLSA Judicial Body which is responsible for investigating the conduct of all persons bound by the *NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics*.
2. The Ethics Panel shall consist of three (3) members, one of whom shall serve as Chair of the Panel.
3. The NLSA may appoint a staff member to serve as the Ethics Committee Secretary to manage claims submitted to the Committee.

XVII. Ethics Panel Procedures

1. The Ethics Committee shall review complaints received in accordance with Section XV above to determine if an investigation into the alleged misconduct is warranted

2. There is no entitlement for an investigation to be opened following the submission of a complaint.
3. The Ethics Panel shall reserve the right to investigate the conduct of all persons bound by the NLSA *Code of Conduct and Ethics* even when said persons are not performing their duties, if such conduct is likely to seriously damage the integrity, image or reputation of the NLSA.
4. If a Region has not addressed a complaint, the Judicial Body may form an Ethics Panel to investigate.
5. If the person named in the complaint is a member of the NLSA Board of Directors, the procedures to be followed are specified in Article 20 of the NLSA By-laws.
6. The Ethics Committee shall carry out an initial evaluation of the complaint.
7. The Ethics Committee may initiate an investigation based on a filed complaint which may include collecting written information, requesting documents and obtaining witness statements.
8. The Ethics Committee may forgo an investigation if, upon review of the initial complaint, it determines that there is enough evidence to conclude that there is a prima facie case.
9. If the Ethics Panel deems that there is no prima facie case, it shall close the case. Such decisions are not subject to appeal. The Ethics Panel shall document all facts in an initial report which shall be sent to the complainant and will be kept on file at the NLSA.
10. If a prima facie case is found, the Ethics Panel shall inform both the complainant and the respondent and shall forward the complaint and all supporting materials to the appropriate Judicial Body.
11. One or more members of the Ethics Panel shall present the case to the Disciplinary Committee if a personal hearing is conducted.

XVIII. Disciplinary Panel

1. The Disciplinary Panel is a Judicial Body which is responsible for investigating the conduct of all persons bound by the NLSA *Disciplinary Code*.
2. The Disciplinary Panel shall consist of up to three (3) members, one of whom shall serve as Chair of the Panel.
3. The NLSA may appoint a staff member to serve as the Disciplinary Panel Secretary to manage claims submitted to the Panel or one the Panel members may serve as Secretary.
4. The Disciplinary Panel is responsible for:
 - a. Investigating and sanctioning serious infringements which have escaped the Match Officials' attention;
 - b. Rectifying obvious errors in the referee's disciplinary decisions;
 - c. Extending the duration of a match suspension incurred automatically by an expulsion;

- d. Pronouncing additional sanctions, such as a fine; and
 - e. Acting upon any report and supporting materials received from the Ethics Panel.
5. The Chair of the Disciplinary Panel may serve as the sole member of the Disciplinary Panel and act as a single judge with respect to the following matters:
- a. urgent or protest cases;
 - b. deciding whether disciplinary proceedings shall be initiated, suspended or terminated;
 - c. suspending a person for up to four (4) matches or up to three (3) months;
 - d. pronouncing a fine of up to \$50,000;
 - e. ruling on increasing or extending a sanction;
 - f. settling disputes arising from an objection relating to the appointment of a member/members of the Disciplinary Committee to hear a case;
 - g. cases involving matters under Section VI of this *Code*; and
 - h. other infringements that are punishable with a fine only.

XIX. Disciplinary Panel Procedures

1. Parties to a complaint are obliged to assist in establishing the facts. As a result, they must comply with requests for information received from a Judicial Body or from the Business Manager. Failure to comply with such requests for information within the stipulated timeline may result in a fine as per the Appendix attached hereto.
2. Types of proof that may be presented include but are not limited to:
 - a. Reports from referees, assistant referees, league commissioner or their delegate and referee inspectors;
 - b. Misconduct reports from other National / Provincial Associations;
 - c. Declarations from the parties and from witnesses;
 - d. Material evidence;
 - e. Expert opinions; and
 - f. Audio and/or video recordings.
3. The Disciplinary Panel has absolute discretion regarding what constitutes proof and which proof is admissible. If there is a discrepancy amongst reports from various officials at the Match, the referee's report is considered authoritative regarding on field events.
4. The Disciplinary Panel will normally make its decision based on the material within its possession once the stipulated timelines are reached. The Disciplinary Panel may summon parties to a personal hearing when it believes that oral statements should be heard. In such instances, the hearing must comply with the requirements in Section XX below.
5. Decisions rendered by the Disciplinary Panel are to be written and must include the names of the Discipline Panel members, the names of the parties, the grounds for the decision and the facts

upon which it was based, the decision itself, and the channels for appeal. Decisions are to be signed by the Chair of the Panel.

6. Written decisions are to be forwarded to the parties concerned within forty-five (45) working days and, in cases where a personal hearing is held, within fifteen (15) working days after the date of the hearing.
7. Decisions may be communicated by facsimile, by electronic mail or by registered letter.

XX. Personal Hearings

1. If the Disciplinary Panel determines that a personal hearing is required, it shall set the hearing on a date within twenty-five (25) business days of receiving the complaint and shall give notice to all parties and, if applicable, to the Region concerned as soon as possible and in every case within at least ten (10) business days' prior to the scheduled hearing. By mutual consent and in writing, the parties may modify these timelines.
2. The Disciplinary Panel that hears the complaint shall have up to three (3) members, one of whom shall serve as Chair.
3. At the Panel's discretion, one of its members may act as recording secretary, or the committee may appoint a non-voting recording secretary to attend the hearing.
4. The accused or the accused's representative appointed in writing must be present at the hearing or the hearing cannot proceed.
5. The parties may call witnesses to the incident to submit written information or to appear at the hearing. The party calling the witness is responsible for expenses when the witness is required to appear at the hearing.
6. The names of the witnesses, their written statements and/or any evidence must be submitted to the Judicial Body at least five (5) days prior to the scheduled hearing, copies of which must be provided to the accused opposing party
7. The hearing must be held behind closed doors and shall proceed as follows. The Chair may adjust the sequence of these actions.
 - a. The Chair shall read the complaint and clearly state the charge.
 - b. The author of the complaint (if present) shall be given an opportunity to comment on or to add any qualifications to the complaint.
 - c. The accused shall be allowed to ask relevant questions to the complainant (if present) and to make submissions and/or statements on his or her own behalf.
 - d. Panel members may question the complainant and the accused and any witnesses invited to participate by either the complainant or the accused.
 - e. The complainant and the accused will be invited to make summary statements before withdrawing.

- f. The Panel shall consider the evidence presented and decide the case such that the timeline in Section XIX (6) is met.
- 8. Requests to postpone a hearing once it is scheduled must be made no later than five (5) business days prior to the hearing date. Such a request must be accompanied by a certified cheque or money order in the amount of \$100.00 to be refunded if the request is denied. This fee may be waived at the discretion of the Disciplinary Panel.
- 9. Failure to appear at a discipline hearing when due written notice has been given will result in suspension of the accused until they request, in writing, and attends another hearing;
- 10. A request for a new hearing must be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of \$100.00;

XXI. Sanctions

- 1. The Discipline Hearing Panel shall have the power to order any of the following sanctions, in any combination, using the minimum standards outlined in Annex A as a guide:
 - a. to be suspended from any or all specific soccer activity either permanently, indefinitely, or for a stated period of time;
 - b. to be suspended for a specific number of scheduled games in a designated competition;
 - c. to be fined;
 - d. to receive a written notice of admonishment;
 - e. to prepare and deliver a letter of apology;
 - f. to pay all expenses of the Discipline Hearing Panel.

XXII. Appeals

- 1. A decision of an NLSA Disciplinary Panel or Ethics Panel may be appealed, as provided for by Section XIV (4) and XIV (5).
- 2. A complainant and/or respondent may apply to the NLSA for leave to appeal a decision rendered via a Regional appeal process, as provided for by Section XIV (3).
- 3. A decision cannot be appealed on its merits alone. An appeal may be heard only if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. Sufficient grounds include the respondent:
 - a. making a decision for which it did not have authority or jurisdiction as set out in governing documents;
 - b. failing to follow procedures as laid out in the approved policies of the association;
 - c. making a decision which was influenced by bias;

- d. exercising its discretion for an improper purpose; or
 - e. making a decision which was unreasonable.
- 4. To submit an appeal, the appellant must apply in writing to the NLSA within ten (10) business days after receipt of the decision being appealed.
- 5. The written appeal must contain:
 - a. Decision being appealed;
 - b. Reason for Appeal;
 - c. Notice to Other Party or Parties;
 - d. Statement of facts;
 - e. Rule or regulation that has been contravened;
 - f. Remedy sought;
 - g. One hard copy or PDF file of the submission;
 - h. The appeal fee of \$500.00
- 6. Where an appeal has been submitted to the NLSA, a decision shall not be suspended unless an NLSA Appeals Panel so orders.
- 7. An appeal shall not defer the decision, except in the event of any financial sanction, fine or penalty that is being contested.

XXIII. Appeals Panel

- 1. The Appeals Panel is an investigative body of the NLSA Judicial Body which is responsible for investigating and adjudicating appeals and are bound by the NLSA Disciplinary Code and the NLSA Code of Conduct and Ethics
- 2. An Appeals Panel shall be up to three (3) members, one of whom shall serve as Chair of the Panel.
- 3. The NLSA may appoint a staff member to serve as Appeals Panel Secretary to manage appeals submitted to the Panel.
- 4. The Chair of the Appeals Committee may serve as the sole member of the Committee and act as a single judge:
 - a. in urgent or transfer appeals;
 - b. deciding on an appeal against a decision to extend a sanction;

- c. resolving disputes arising from objections to members selected to serve on the Appeals Committee;
- d. ruling on appeals against provisional decisions made by the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee;
- e. pronouncing, altering, or annulling provisional measures;
- f. in cases where the sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee is a fine of up to \$50,000.00 or a suspension from playing or carrying out a function for up to five (5) matches or a period of time up to twelve (12) months;
- g. to determine if leave to appeal should be granted and/or cases where the appeal is clearly inadmissible; or
- h. at the request of the parties.

XXIV. Appeals Panel Procedures

1. Any party intending to appeal shall inform the NLSA of its intention to do so in writing within ten (10) business days of notification of the decision being appealed. This application for leave to appeal notification shall include the grounds for appeal as per Section XXII above and must be accompanied by a certified cheque, money order or e-transfer for \$500. This amount will be reimbursed to the appellant if the case is successful. If the deposit is insufficient, the unsuccessful appellant will be ordered to pay the difference.
2. Sanctions, other than financial orders, imposed remain in force until the Appeals Panel procedure is completed.
3. Financial orders to pay a sum of money are suspended until the Appeals Panel procedure is completed.
4. Within fifteen (15) business days' of receipt of the appeal, the Appeals Panel must decide whether or not the appeal has been made on legitimate grounds.
5. If the Appeals Panel determines that the appeal is made on legitimate grounds, it shall inform both the appellant and the respondent immediately and shall provide a copy of the appeal to the respondent. If the Appeals Panel determines that the appeal is not made on legitimate grounds it shall so inform the appellant who shall be granted no further avenues of appeal.
6. The respondent shall be granted fifteen (15) business days to submit a rebuttal to the appellant's submission.
7. The Appeals Panel may, at its sole discretion and without holding a hearing, decide an appeal if, on the basis of the written documentation submitted to it, it is evident that the NLSA *By-laws* and/or NLSA *Rules and Regulations* and/or NLSA *Code of Conduct and Ethics* have or have not been breached.
8. If upon review of the written submissions from the parties the Appeals Panel determines that a personal hearing is required, the hearing process will be followed as per Section XX above.
9. Decisions rendered by the Appeals Panel are to be written and must include the names of the Appeals Panel members, the names of the parties, the grounds for the decision, the facts upon

which it was based and the decision itself. Decisions are to be signed by the Chair of the Appeal Panel.

10. Written decisions are to be forwarded to the parties concerned within five (5) business days and, in cases where a personal hearing is held, within five (5) business days after the date of the hearing.
11. Decisions may be communicated by facsimile, by electronic mail or by registered letter.
12. The right is reserved for an appeal to be made to Canada Soccer as affirmed in the NLSA Soccer *By-laws*.

The NLSA *Disciplinary Code (NLSADC)* came into force on March 20, 2019 and may be amended, deleted, or replaced by Ordinary Resolution of the Board of Directors. With immediate effect, all NLSA disciplinary hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the *NLSADC*. Regions and Leagues shall ensure that their disciplinary rules, regulations, and procedures are consistent with those of the NLSA effective immediately.

ANNEX A

Tables of Minimum Sanctions for Misconduct

As per Section V of the NLSA Discipline Code the guidelines below represent the minimum sanctions that A Judicial Body may apply. For the avoidance of doubt sanctions may be either one of, or a combination of, a fine and/or suspension. In the case of sanctions for Serious Infringements outlined below, players are required to serve the minimum suspension for the offense. Sanctions for any offense may be increased based upon the weight of the evidence presented and/or on the severity of the misconduct.

Contents of these Tables are the responsibility of the NLSA and may be amended at any time.

1. Breaching the Code of Conduct and Ethics

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum Suspension
1.1	Offensive Behaviour & Fair Play – Anyone who insults someone in any way, especially using offensive gestures or language, or who violates the principles of fair play	Administrative	\$250.00	Suspended From all soccer related activities for thirty (30) days
1.2	Discrimination / Harassment (Player or Official)	Field/ Administrative	\$2 500.00 (Player), \$10 000.00 (Official)	Player ten (10) matches (Official) suspended from all soccer related activities for forty-five (45) deduction, and/or relegation, and/or team Disqualification from Competition
1.3	Discrimination / Harassment 1 or more persons/Officials from same Club or Region	Field/ Administrative	\$20,000 (team/Region)	Point deduction, and/or relegation, and/or team disqualification from competition
1.4	Discrimination / Harassment (Team Supporters)	Field/ Administrative	\$20 000.00 (Team / Region)	Stadium ban of at least two (2) years.
1.5	Discrimination / Harassment (Spectators)	Field/ Administrative	(\$20 000.00) Team / Region	Stadium ban of at least two (2) years.
1.6	Threats (intimidation of a Match official)	Field/ Administrative	\$1 000.00	(Player) six (6) match Suspension (Official) suspended from all soccer related activities for sixty (60) days; where appropriate

				removal from a position of authority.
1.7	Coercion (violence or threats to pressure a Match Official)	Field/ Administrative	\$1 000.00	(Player) six (6) match suspension (Official) suspended from all soccer related activities for sixty (60) days; where appropriate removal from a position of authority.
1.8	Forgery and Falsification (Player)	Field/ Administrative	\$250.00	Six (6) Matches
1.9	Forgery and Falsification (Official, match agent or intermediary)	Field/ Administrative	\$500.00	a twelve (12) month ban on taking part in any soccer related activity
1.10	Forgery and Falsification Region	Field/ Administrative	\$2 500.00	Expulsion from a competition
1.11	Forgery and Falsification (Club)	Field/ Administrative	\$1 000.00	expulsion from a competition and/or a transfer ban
1.12	Corruption	Field/ Administrative	\$10 000.00	complete ban on taking part in any soccer-related activity and on entering any stadium
1.13	Unlawfully Influencing Match Results (Match Fixing)	Field/ Administrative	\$10 000.00	complete ban on taking part in any soccer-related activity match suspension
1.14	Doping	Field/ Administrative	As defined in accordance with the CCES Anti- Doping Regulations	as defined in accordance with the CCES Anti- Doping Regulations
1.15	Failure to Respect Decisions (Club / Region)	Field/ Administrative	\$500.00	point deduction and/or relegation to a lower division and/or expulsion from Canada Soccer NLSA Competitions

1.16	Failure to Respect Decisions (Player / Official)	Field/ Administrative	\$250.00	12-month ban on taking part in any soccer- related activity
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2. Minor Infringements – *Laws of the Game*

For minor infringements, the Competition Regulations may identify a fine structure and/or a yellow card accumulation suspension to be imposed. A player is cautioned if he commits any of the following offences:

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum Suspension
2.1	Unsporting behavior	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.2	Dissent by word or action	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.3	Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.4	Delaying the restart of play	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.5	Failure to retreat the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.6	Entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's Permission	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.7	Deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's Permission	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
2.8	First Caution	Field	NA	No Action
2.9	Second Caution	Field	NA	No Action
2.10	Third Caution	Field	NA	1 game

2.11	Fourth Caution	Field	NA	1 game
2.12	Fifth Caution	Field	NA	2 games
2.13	Sixth Caution	Field	NA	3 games
2.14	Seventh Caution	Field	NA	4 games
2.15	Eighth Caution	Field	NA	5 games
2.16	Subsequent Cautions	Field	NA	6 games

3. Serious Infringements of the FIFA Laws of the Game: Misconduct Against Opponents or Persons Other than Match Officials

Where a player or member of the team technical staff is dismissed by a Match Official the following minimum suspensions are to be applied. The Disciplinary Committee hearing the case may, based on the weight of evidence presented, impose further sanctions as per Section XVIII 4(c) and apply additional sanctions as per Section XVIII 4(d). Competition Regulations may have in place a fine structure; this does not replace or negate the requirement for a participant to fulfil the minimum suspension outlined below. A player or team's technical staff shall be dismissed if they commit any of the following offences:

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum Suspension
3.1	Serious foul play (including the use of excessive or brute force)	Field	As per competition regulations	a two (2) match suspension
3.2	Violent conduct (including elbowing, punching, kicking, etc.)	Field	As per competition regulations	a three (3) match suspension
3.3	Biting or Spitting at some one an opponent or any other person	Field	team/club/PTSO fine of \$250 As per competition regulations	a seven (7) match suspension
3.4	Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal- scoring opportunity by deliberately handling	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension

	the ball (except a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)			
3.5	Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick	Field/ Administrative	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
3.6	Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures	Field	As per competition regulations	a two (2) match suspension
3.7	Receiving a second caution (Yellow Card) in the same match	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension

4. Misconduct Against Match Officials

Notwithstanding the sanctions outlined in Section 3 above, where misconduct is directed at a Match Official in the circumstances described below the minimum sanctions imposed shall be, but not limited to, the following:

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum
4.1	Unsporting conduct towards a Match Official (using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures to a Match Official)	Field	As per competition regulations	a six (6) match suspension or an appropriate amount of time
4.2	Assaulting (elbowing, punching, kicking, hitting, biting, spitting etc.) a Match Official	Field	As per competition regulations	a fifteen (15) match suspension or an appropriate amount of time
4.3	Intimidating or threatening a Match official Spitting at a Match Official	Field	As per competition regulations	a twelve (12) month suspension.

5. Disorderliness at Matches and Competitions

Disciplinary measures may be imposed on Regional Clubs and Associations where disorderliness takes place.

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum
5.1	Inciting hatred and violence during a match (player or Official)	Field/ Administrative	\$2,500	Player Twelve (12) match suspension (official) suspended from all soccer related activities for six (6) months where appropriate for removal from a position of authority.
5.2	Inciting hatred and violence (player or official) using mass and/or social media or if it takes place on a match day in or around a stadium	Field/ Administrative	\$10,000	(Player) twelve (12) match suspension (official) Suspended from all soccer related activities for six (6) months; where appropriate removal from a position of authority.
5.3	Provoking the general public during a match (Player or official)	Field / Administrative	\$1000.00	(Player) a two (2) matches suspension (Official) suspended from all soccer related activities for forty-five (45) days; where appropriate removal from a position of authority. Activities for (45) forty-five days; where appropriate removal from a position of authority
5.4	Improper conduct among spectators (letting off Incendiary Device)	Field/Administration	\$250	most serious offences a number of games, or certain sections of the ground, not being open to the public.
5.5	Improper conduct among spectators (displaying insulting or political slogans in any form)	Field/Administration	\$250	most serious offences a number of games, or certain sections of the ground, not being open to the public.
5.6	Improper conduct among spectators (entering or invading the field of play)	Field/Administration	\$250	most serious offences a number of games, or certain sections of the ground, not being open to the public.

5.7	Improper conduct among spectators, (violence towards persons uttering insulting words or sounds)	Field/Administration	\$250	most serious offences a number of games, or certain sections of the ground, not being open to the public.
5.8	Improper conduct among spectators (throwing missiles)	Field/Administration	\$250	most serious offences a number of games, or certain sections of the ground, not being open to the public.

Where a Club has been previously sanctioned in any one season for offences in Clause 5 above subsequent minimum sanctions will be doubled.

6. Team Misconduct

Disciplinary measures may be imposed on the Regional Clubs and Associations where a team fails to conduct itself properly. In particular:

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum Suspension
6.1	Where a referee sanctions at least five (5) members of the same team during a match (caution or expulsion)	Field	team/Club/Region fine of \$250	N/A
6.2	Where several players or Officials of the same team threaten or harass Match Officials or other person(s)	Field	team/Club/Region fine of \$1000	Suspension may be imposed
6.3	Where two (2) or more players surround a Match Official to protest a decision	Field	team/club/Region fine of \$250	N/A
6.4	Player ineligibility – An ineligible player takes part in a sanctioned competition match(s)	Field	\$1,000	Team forfeits the match(s)
6.5	Un-played Match in Provincial League or Competition without just cause	Field/ Administrative	\$2,500 per game against the Association or Club/team responsible	Match shall be forfeited
6.6	Abandoned Match (Region/Team/Club behavior)	Field/ Administrative	\$2,500 against the Association or Club/Team responsible	Match shall either be forfeited or replayed as per competition regulations
6.7	Brawl	Field	As per competition regulations	a six (6) match suspension to be imposed on those found guilty of inciting or provoking the offence

7. Team Official Misconduct

	Name/Description of Misconduct	Field/ Administrative	Fine	Minimum Suspension
7.1	Where an offence is committed and the offender cannot be identified, the senior team coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction	Field	As per competition regulations	As per the offence committed
7.2	Entering the field of play in a respectful/non-confrontational manner	Field	As per competition regulations	Warning. Repeated/Blatant offences: yellow or red card
7.3	Failing to cooperate with a match official e.g. ignoring an instruction/request from an assistant referee or the fourth official		As per competition regulations	Warning. Repeated/Blatant offences: yellow or red card
7.4	Minor/low-level disagreement (by word or action) with a decision	Field	As per competition regulations	Warning. Repeated/Blatant offences: yellow or red card
7.5	Occasionally leaving the confines of the technical area without committing another offence	Field	As per competition regulations	Warning. Repeated/Blatant offences: yellow or red card
7.6	Clearly/persistently not respecting the confines of their team's technical area	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.7	delaying the restart of play by their team	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.8	delaying the restart of play by their team	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.9	deliberately entering the technical area of the opposing team (non-confrontational)	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.10	dissent by word or action including: throwing/kicking drinks bottles or other objects; gestures which show a clear lack of respect for the match official(s) e.g. sarcastic clapping	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card

7.11	excessively/persistently gesturing for a red or yellow card	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.12	gesturing or acting in a provocative or inflammatory manner	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.13	persistent unacceptable behaviour (including repeated warning offences)	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.14	showing a lack of respect for the game	Field	As per competition regulations	Yellow Card
7.15	delaying the restart of play by the opposing team e.g. holding onto the ball, kicking the ball away, obstructing player movement	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.16	deliberately leaving the technical area to: show dissent towards, or remonstrate with, a match official; act in a provocative or inflammatory manner	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.17	enter the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.18	deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.19	entering the field of play to: confront a match official (including at half-time and full-time); interfere with play, an opposing player or a match official	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.20	entering the Referee Changing Room at any time	Field	As per competition regulations	a three (3) match suspension
7.21	physical or aggressive behaviour (including spitting or biting) towards an opposing player, substitute, team official, match official, spectator or any other person (e.g. ball boy/girl, security or competition official etc.)	Field	As per competition regulations	a seven (7) match suspension; 15 match suspension if against a match official

7.22	receiving a second caution in the same match	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.23	using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures	Field	As per competition regulations	a two (2) match suspension
7.24	using unauthorized electronic or communication equipment and/or behaving in an inappropriate manner as the result of using electronic or communication equipment	Field	As per competition regulations	a one (1) match suspension
7.25	violent conduct	Field	As per competition regulations	a three (3) match suspension
7.26	First Caution	Field	NA	No Action
7.27	Second Caution	Field	NA	1 Game
7.28	Third Caution	Field	NA	2 games
7.29	Fourth Caution	Field	NA	3 games
7.30	Fifth Caution	Field	NA	4 games
7.31	Sixth Caution	Field	NA	5 games
7.32	Seventh Caution	Field	NA	6 games
7.33	Eighth Caution	Field	NA	7 games
7.34	Subsequent Cautions	Field	NA	8 games