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United DFC Policies and Procedures Discipline and Complaints Policy

1.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the conditions for which complaints may be issued and the manner (i.e. disciplinary procedures) by which complaints are addressed by United DFC.

2.0 Definitions

Complainant refers to the person making the complaint.

Respondent refers to the person against whom a complaint is made.

Official: For the purposes of this Policy, an “Official” is any United DFC board member, Executive Director, or other individual occupying a position of authority within United DFC who is designated to respond to the complainant. The role of the Official is to serve in a neutral, unbiased capacity in receiving the complaint and assisting in its informal resolution.

Persons in Authority: Is defined as those persons in positions of authority, such as roles as coach, assistant coach, team manager, executive member, administrator, referee, or any Persons of Authority who works with, for, or around **athletes**.

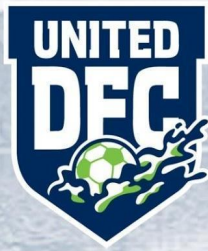
Team Staff: refers to any volunteer specifically assigned to a United DFC team (i.e. Coaches, assistant coaches, Team Managers)

United DFC Participant: In the context of this policy, United DFC participant refers to Athletes, parents, and team staff (i.e. Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers)

Vulnerable Participant: Includes Minors and vulnerable adults (people who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by people in positions of trust or authority).

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all United DFC participants subject to United DFC’s Code of Conduct and any violations to United DFC’s Safe Sport policies.



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4.0 Policy Statement

Any Participant found to be engaging in any form of Maltreatment, which violates the integrity of Participants and undermines the values of United DFC, or otherwise breaches the United DFC Code of Conduct may be subjected to disciplinary actions.

Designated Officials will determine the severity of the infraction to determine the appropriate disciplinary measures. In cases of particularly serious incidents, the Board of Directors may impose immediate suspensions or bans from Club activities.

United DFC may also revoke the Club registration, access, or privileges for Participants are Participants associated with any person who fails to comply with disciplinary measures taken by the Club. There will not be any refund of registration fees if a player is suspended or dismissed due to misconduct.

All complaints or incident reports should be made in writing and the complainant should contact the individual occupying a position of authority within United DFC who is designated to respond to the complainant for further direction.

Vulnerable Participants

Complaints may be brought for or against a Vulnerable Participants. Vulnerable Participants must have a parent/guardian, or other adult serve as their representative during this process. All communication from the Official must be directed to the Vulnerable Participant's representative.

The Organization as Complainant

At its discretion, the Organization (United DFC) may act as the Complainant and initiate the complaint process under the terms of this Policy. In such cases, the Organization will identify an individual to represent the organization.

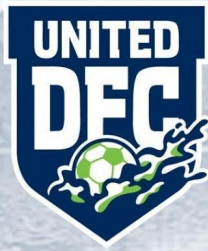
Confidential Complaints

In order to further United DFC's commitment to having a positive, safe and respectful sport environment, this Policy facilitates the reporting of complaints anonymously.

All United DFC Participants are expected to promptly report any behaviour of which they become aware that may constitute a breach of its Safe Sport policies, in particular the Athlete Protection Policy and/or Code of Conduct Policy, or contravenes the law. This includes situations where the breach is suspected, provided the United DFC Participant has reasonable grounds to believe such suspicion is true.

5.0 Procedures

5.1: Reporting Complaints



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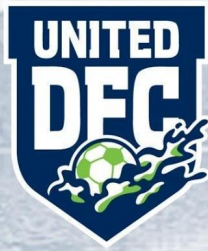
- a. A person who experiences Maltreatment or witnesses another Participant engaging in any form of Maltreatment, which violates the integrity of Participants and undermines the values of United DFC, or otherwise breaches the United DFC Code of Conduct is encouraged to make it known to that Participant, now Respondent, that the behaviour is unwelcome, offensive and contrary to the policies of United DFC.
- b. If confronting the Respondent is not possible or if after confronting the Respondent the Maltreatment or Code of Conduct breach continues, the Complainant should request a meeting with an Official of United DFC. For the purposes of this Policy, an “Official” is any United DFC board member, Executive Director, or other individual occupying a position of authority (i.e. Person of Authority) within United DFC.
- c. Once contacted by a Complainant, the role of the Official is to serve in a neutral, unbiased capacity in receiving the complaint and assisting in its informal resolution. If the Official considers that they are unable to act in this capacity or that the complaint exceeds the scope of their authority, the Complainant will be referred to another suitable United DFC Official.
- d. Where a person believes that a Participant of United DFC has experienced or is experiencing Maltreatment and reports this belief to an Official, the Official will meet with the person said to have experienced Maltreatment and proceed in accordance with these procedures.
- e. Where an Official believes there is sufficient evidence to warrant laying a formal complaint but the Complainant does not wish to do so, the Official may lay a formal complaint and proceed in accordance with these procedures.

5.2 Response and Remedies

United DFC recognizes that not all incidents of Maltreatment, Code of Conduct, and policy breaches are equally serious in their consequences. Maltreatment, Code of Conduct, and policy breaches cover a wide spectrum of behaviours, and the responses must be equally broad in range, appropriate to the behaviour in question and capable of providing a constructive remedy. The process of investigation and settlement of any complaint must be fair to all parties, allowing adequate opportunity for the presentation of a defence to the charges.

Minor incidents should be corrected promptly and informally, taking a constructive approach with the aim of bringing about a change in negative attitudes and behaviour. This policy does not prevent an appropriate Person of Authority from taking immediate, informal, corrective disciplinary action in response to behaviour that, in their view, constitutes a minor incident of maltreatment, and/or breach of United DFC policy or Code of Conduct.

More serious incidents (e.g. serious Maltreatment, harrassment, any form of sexual or physical assault) should be dealt with according to the association policy guidelines.



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Complaints should be handled in a timely, sensitive, responsible and confidential manner. There should be no tolerance of reprisals taken against any party to a complaint. The names of parties and the circumstances of the complaint should be kept confidential except where disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigation or taking disciplinary measures.

Anyone making a complaint, which is found to be clearly unfounded, false, malicious or frivolous, will be subject to discipline as outlined in this policy.

5.3 Complaint Procedure for Officials

Officials must maintain records of all complaints and/or incident reports to be submitted to the Executive Director and Board of Directors. There are four possible outcomes once a complaint is received by an Official:

- a. It may be determined that the conduct does not constitute Maltreatment or breach of policy and/or Code of Conduct, in which case the matter will be closed.
- b. It may be determined that an appropriate/most direct Person of Authority take immediate, **informal**, corrective disciplinary action.
- c. It may be determined that the incident of Maltreatment, or breach of policy and/or Code of Conduct exceeds the scope of authority of the most direct Person of Authority and/or the designated Official and be referred to the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors as a formalised complaint and for recommended disciplinary action as detailed in section 5.4 Discipline.
- d. It may be determined that appropriate corrective action has already been taken.

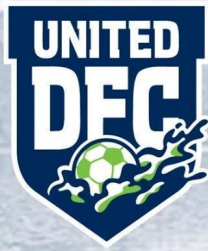
5.4 Discipline

When considering appropriate disciplinary action, the Executive Director and United DFC Board of Directors shall consider factors such as:

- The nature and severity of the complaint.
- Whether the Maltreatment or policy violation was an isolated incident or part of an ongoing pattern.
- The nature of the relationship between the Complainant and Respondent.
- The age of the Complainant.
- Whether the Respondent had been involved in previous incidents.
- Whether the Respondent admitted responsibility and expressed a willingness to change.
- Whether the Respondent retaliated against the Complainant.

In invoking disciplinary sanctions, the Executive Director and United DFC Board of Directors may consider the following options, singly or in combination, depending on the nature and severity of the harassment:

- Verbal apology
- Written apology



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- Letter of reprimand from United DFC
- Removal of certain privileges/access
- Temporary suspension
- Dismissal/Expulsion
- Recommendation to escalate to appropriate authority.

5.6 Confidentiality

United DFC will use reasonable efforts having regard to the circumstances, to conduct the initial review and assessment in confidence, including where reasonably possible, protecting the anonymity of the Complainant.

To the extent possible, reports, complaints, witness statements, and other documents produced under this Policy or shared in an investigation, shall be held in confidence by United DFC. However, United DFC may not make guarantees of confidentiality. Circumstances in which information may be shared include, without limitation:

- a. when criminal conduct may be involved;
- b. when it is felt to be necessary to protect others from harassment, discrimination, violence or any other potential breach of the Code of Conduct Policy;
- c. when required to ensure fairness or natural justice in the procedures contemplated by this Policy;
- d. in the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency;
- e. to protect the interests of United DFC; and
- f. when required by law.

Any person who reports a concern in good faith will not be subject to reprisal or other adverse consequences as a result of submitting a complaint.

For the purpose of this Policy, knowingly making a groundless or false allegation, or knowingly providing false information shall also be deemed a reprisal and may be subject to sanctions under the Code of Conduct Policy.

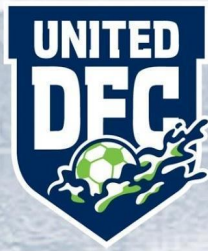
Anonymous complaints can be submitted using the attached form.

5.7 Appeals

Participants who wish to appeal a decision have seven (7) days from the date on which they received notice of the decision to submit, in writing to United DFC, the following:

- a. Grounds for the appeal
- b. Detailed reasons for the appeal
- c. All evidence that supports these grounds
- d. Requested remedy or remedies

A Participant who wishes to initiate an appeal beyond the seven (7) day period must provide a written request stating the reasons for an exemption. The decision to allow, or not allow, an appeal outside of the seven (7) day period will be at the sole discretion of the United DFC Board of Directors.



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Sufficient Grounds

A decision cannot be appealed on its merits alone. An appeal may only be heard if there are sufficient grounds for appeal. Sufficient grounds include the Respondent:

- Made a decision that it did not have the authority or jurisdiction (as set out in the Respondent's governing documents) to make
- Failed to follow its own procedures (as set out in the Respondent's governing documents)
- Made a decision that was influenced by bias (where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the decision-maker appears not to have considered other views)
- Failed to consider relevant information or took into account irrelevant information in making the decision
- Made a decision that was grossly unreasonable

The Appellant must demonstrate, on a balance of probabilities, that the Respondent has made a procedural error as listed above and that this error had, or may reasonably have had, a material effect on the decision or decision-maker.

6.0 Related Legislation and/or Documents

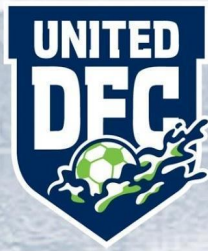
Athlete Protection Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Anonymous Complaint Form (next page)

7.0 Approval and Review

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Board of Directors
Administrator	Executive Director
Next Review Date	05/06/2025
Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	27/05/2018
Amendment Authority and Date	05/06/2022



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Notes	
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Anonymous Complaint Form

This Anonymous Complaint Form allows you the opportunity to provide your name and contact information in confidence as this information may assist United DFC in investigating your concern. Should you not wish to provide your name, reported incidents will still be accepted and investigated if sufficient documentation and evidence is provided to substantiate the claim.

Instructions

Please provide as much detail as possible.

1. Describe the nature of your concern and the violation that may constitute a breach of the Athlete Protection Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, or contravenes the law. . Include sufficient information for an independent person to understand the concern and to enable further investigation.
2. Provide details with respect to the location and/or date of the incident (e.g. region, event, specific location, department, etc.) and how you became aware of it.
3. State the full name, title and role of each individual whom you suspect of wrongdoing.
4. How many times has this incident taken place (if applicable)?
5. How long has this incident been taking place (if applicable)?
6. Describe steps, if any, you took prior to completing this report (e.g. discussing it with an individual, informing supervisor).
7. Would you be willing to provide your name and contact information? (Please note that this is optional)
 - a. No. If no, we may not be able to follow up with you.
 - b. Yes. If yes, please provide your name, email, and telephone number for follow up purposes.

Forms can be mailed anonymously % United DFC President to:

[75 MacDonald Ave \(Unit 4\), Dartmouth, NS, B3B 1T8](#)

If willing to provide your name and contact information, the form may be emailed to or emailed to president@udfc.ca.