



WCF Code of Conduct Complaints Procedures

Version 1.0
Effective Date:
27 August 2024

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to provide and maintain an orderly, effective, efficient, and proportional process to resolve complaints involving matters coming within the terms of the WCF Code of Conduct set out in Statute 116 other than matters arising at a WCF Event which have been dealt with under the Sports Regulations.


2. DEFINITION

2.1 In this Complaints Procedure:

2.1.1 WCF is the World Croquet Federation.

2.1.2 WCF Affiliate is an individual who is:

- i. an Officer or a member of the Management Committee of the WCF;
- ii. an individual providing services or assistance to the WCF (or at a WCF Event) whether as a contractor, an employee, a coach, or a volunteer and irrespective of the duty being performed;
- iii. an individual in attendance by invitation at premises or locations under the control of the WCF or at which a WCF Event is being held; or

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- iv. a participant or prospective participant (defined as all persons validly nominated by Members to play following the issuing of the WCF Event Invitation) in a tournament organised by or under the authority of the WCF.

3. APPLICATION

3.1 This Complaint Procedure applies to any WCF Affiliate involved in any WCF activity including but not limited to a WCF Event or Tournament.

4. COMPLAINT

4.1 A WCF Affiliate who believes they have been adversely affected by the conduct of another WCF Affiliate involving a matter of behaviour or conduct to which the complainant considers the WCF Code of Conduct set out in Statute 116 may apply, may make a complaint in accordance with this procedure.

4.1.1 An eyewitness may make a complaint on behalf of a WCF affiliate but should only do so after having first made reasonable efforts to ascertain the facts of the case indicating that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred.

4.2 To avoid the risk of unfair treatment, it is important that all complaints are made honestly and only discussed with those people who need to know.


4.3 Depending on the circumstances and severity of the issue, the WCF expects Complainants to have made reasonable attempts to resolve issues directly with the Respondent before raising a formal complaint. If not, the investigator may request that such informal resolution is attempted before proceeding further.

5. COMMENCING A COMPLAINT

5.1 The complainant shall provide a note or memorandum in writing to the Secretary-General, or if the Secretary-General is potentially conflicted then to the President, stating the place, date and time of the occurrence and sufficient detail for the nature of the matter to be understandable by a third party. If possible, the complainant should provide the names of witnesses who may be able to comment on the substance of the complaint.

5.2 If the matter occurred at a WCF Event and was handled at the time, then the matter will afterward have been referred to the Secretary-General or President for review (or an independent investigator if they are conflicted), after which review, depending on the circumstances of the case, the matter might either be closed with no further action or referred for further investigation under this policy.

5.3 If the matter occurred at a WCF Event but was not raised at the time, the complainant should raise the matter as in 5.1 above.

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6. INVESTIGATION OF THE COMPLAINT

6.1 The WCF will maintain a panel of potential Investigators comprised of individuals from various Members. An impartial Investigator will be appointed by the Secretary-General or President from this panel to run the investigation. This panel might include members of the MC provided the case does not involve any of the MC.

6.2 The Investigator will interview:

- i. the complainant;
- ii. the respondent (the person against whom the complaint is made); and/or
- iii. any witnesses.

6.3 A support person may be present with the complainant and respondent and shall be present if either is under 18 years of age.

6.4 The Investigator will advise the complainant, respondent and witnesses of the necessity of confidentiality.

6.5 The investigation should be unbiased and ensure that both sides have the right to be heard.

7. RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT

7.1 The respondent must be given the opportunity to:

- i. know what the complaint is about and who it is made by;
- ii. respond to the complaint and have their account heard, including the right to respond to the evidence presented;
- iii. have time to respond; and
- iv. obtain such support as they feel necessary to respond.

8. RIGHTS OF THE COMPLAINANT

8.1 The complainant should have the opportunity to:

- i) clarify their complaint, should it become clear during the investigation that their original statement was misleading, incomplete or inaccurate in some way;
- ii) be briefed on the Respondent's or Witnesses' statements and have the opportunity to respond;
- iii) withdraw their complaint.

9. THE INVESTIGATION REPORT

9.1 At the conclusion of the investigations, the Investigator will prepare a suitably concise report regarding the facts of the situation based on the balance of probabilities. The report will include:

- i. the basis of the complaint;



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- ii. the response of the respondent to the allegation(s);
- iii. a summary of any information provided by witnesses;
- iv. reasons why any one person's evidence is preferred;
- v. any other details explaining or deemed pertinent to the investigation;
- vi. any recommendations for the resolution of the complaint; and
- vii. when appropriate, any recommendation on preventing the situation happening again.

9.2 The Investigator will ensure the report retains such confidentiality and anonymity as is practical and feasible, particularly with respect to any input from third party witnesses.

9.3 The Report will be shared with:

- i. the complainant;
- ii. the respondent; and
- iii. the Secretary-General (or President if the Secretary-General is conflicted).

10. DECISION MAKING

10.1 The Investigator may dismiss the complaint or impose sanctions that may include a verbal or written apology; a letter of reprimand; a fine or levy; a ban for a period from future participation in WCF tournaments; an exclusion from team selection; or any other measures the Investigator considers appropriate.

10.2 A Disciplinary Committee will be convened if requested by any of those receiving the report, who determine that the complaint requires further investigation, action or an appeal.

10.2.1 Any such request must include an explanation of the basis for the escalation.


10.3 If so required, the Disciplinary Committee meeting will be convened promptly, ideally within 21 days of the completion of the Investigator's report.

10.4 The Committee will comprise 3 impartial members from the panel of Investigators and/or the Management Committee who will:

- i. receive the Investigator's report;
- ii. consider the report;
- iii. provide the complainant and the respondent with the opportunity to respond to it and comment on any factors they consider should or should not have been considered and the reasonableness of conclusion; and
- iv. determine what action is appropriate.

11. RECORD KEEPING

11.1 A confidential record of formal complaints that have been upheld shall be retained in accordance with the WCF Privacy Policy. This record should include a record of the investigation, the decision of the disciplinary committee, if any, and what action was taken.

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11.2 Records of formal complaints that are not upheld shall be destroyed after 3 months after all decisions under this Complaints Procedure have been finalised.

12. RETALIATION

12.1 Retaliation against an individual who has filed a complaint, participated in any procedure under the policy or been associated with a person who filed a complaint will be treated as harassment.

13. SUPPORT

13.1 The WCF understand that both the complainant and the respondent may wish to access and involve appropriate support. Should such personnel become involved, they are also bound to confidentiality to the same extent as the complainant and respondent.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

14.1 All people involved in the investigation of complaints are required to keep it confidential during the course of the investigation and ongoing confidentiality may be required. Any breach of confidentiality may incur consequences as determined by the Investigator.

END

<i>Version Control</i>	
<i>27 August 2024 version 1.0</i>	<i>Initial document. Approved by Member vote on Topic 130: Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure.</i>