

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES CONCERNING FIELD OFFENCES

As set out in the Schedule hereto for Players associated with Clubs competing in the Football Conference (North and South Divisions), the Isthmian League, the Northern Premier League and the Southern League.

1. GENERAL

- (a) Clubs may participate in an FA pilot programme as set out by Council and will be required to abide by the regulations and terms of that programme.

2. REPORTING OF OFFENCES BY MATCH OFFICIALS

(a) Caution Offences

Referees must submit to The Association within two days of the match (Sundays not included) a Report stating the offence and giving a description of the incident.

(b) Sending Off Offences

Referees and Assistant Referees must submit to The Association within two days of the match (Sundays not included) a Report stating the offence(s) and giving a description of the incident(s).

- (c) If a referee omits to show the appropriate card when taking action against a player, this does not nullify the caution or sending off offence. However, the attention of the Referee should be drawn to the correct procedure.

3. CAUTION OFFENCES

A player who has been cautioned in any match, will be notified through his Club by The Association of the offence reported by the Referee, the total number of cautions recorded against the player during the current Season and at the same time, will be advised of any punishment resulting from the accumulation of cautions. An administration fee of £10.00 will be charged for the processing of each report. Any such punishment will take effect regardless of whether or not the notification of it from The Association is received before it is due to take effect in accordance with these Disciplinary Procedures.

4. SENDING OFF OFFENCES

A player who has been sent off in any match under the provisions of Law 12 will be notified through his Club by The Association of the offence reported by the Referee, and at the same time advised that he will be subject to the agreed standard punishment (see Section 8). An administration fee of £10.00 will be charged for the processing of each report. Any such punishment will take effect regardless of whether or not the notification of it from The Association is received before it is due to take effect in accordance with these Disciplinary Procedures.

5. SUSPENSIONS

During periods of automatic suspensions the player is suspended from playing only for Saturday type football (including midweek fixtures). If the suspension is as a result of a Misconduct charge, during the whole period of suspension the player is suspended from playing all football (including friendly matches and other Cup Competitions). The categories of football affected by this regulation are Saturday, Sunday, Midweek, Veterans and Representative football. This will be deemed as a suspension from playing only, unless specified otherwise by a Disciplinary Commission.

6. CLAIMS OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

In the case of a claim of alleged mistaken identity concerning a player cautioned or sent off in a match, the PLAYERS concerned and the CLUB must within three working days of the match submit in writing to The Football Regulatory Authority particulars upon which the claim is founded, including the right to claim Wrongful Dismissal. If The Football Regulatory Authority is satisfied that the claim warrants further investigation, a Regulatory Commission shall be convened and will meet within the 14 days before any automatic penalty is due to take effect. If the members of the appointed Regulatory Commission are satisfied that mistaken identity has been proved in a case, the record of the offence will be transferred to the appropriate offender, who will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of the current Procedures.

The relevant fee which **MUST** be included with the evidence is £125 which may be retained if the claim is deemed to be unfounded and be used in full or in part to cover any costs incurred by a Regulatory Commission. In the event of the fee not covering the amount of costs charged, an additional amount may be charged by the Regulatory Commission.

7. CLAIMS OF WRONGFUL DISMISSAL

In the case of a claim of wrongful dismissal for offences with a penalty imposed under the Laws of the Game of an immediate dismissal (this excludes Law S6, the use of offensive or insulting or abusive language/gestures and Law S7 - receiving a second caution in the same match), evidence upon which the claim is founded, which must include a video and/or DVD recording showing the incident, must be submitted by the player concerned and his Club, together with the relevant fee and **MUST** be received by The Football Association by the close of business of the third **working** day following the match (as below). An indication by fax (**0844 980 0626**) or e-mail (disciplinary@thefa.com) on the first working day following the game is required to alert The Football Regulatory Authority that a claim is to be submitted.

Saturday	-	Wednesday
Sunday	-	Wednesday
Monday	-	Thursday
Tuesday	-	Friday
Wednesday	-	Monday
Thursday	-	Tuesday
Friday	-	Wednesday

(If Bank Holidays fall within the period, the appropriate number of extra days will be made available.)

Once the claim is lodged with The Football Association and it is confirmed that the video and/or DVD shows the incident as reported by the Referee/Assistant Referee and the claim has conformed with the criteria, the Club will then be advised whether the claim has been accepted or not.

An accepted claim will be placed before a Regulatory Commission to which the Club, player and Match Officials will **NOT** be invited to attend. They will be dealing with the level of punishment only. The dismissal from the Field of Play will always remain on the record of the Club and the player and be the subject of the administration fee and the appropriate number of penalty points for a sending off.

The only decisions available to the members of the Regulatory Commission are:-

- (i) The punishment will remain with the fee being retained;
- (ii) The punishment will be withdrawn, the fee returned and that Section 8(f) of the procedure will not be invoked if the player is sent off again following the offence.

The relevant fee is £125 and will be retained if the case is deemed to be unfounded and returned if any alterations are made to the offence or punishment.

8. NON-FIRST TEAM MATCHES

All misconduct reported from matches not deemed to be a FTCM (First Team Competitive Match) will be dealt with by the County Association to which the Club is affiliated. The player will have the right to request an Appeal against decisions of County Associations in accordance with The Rules and Regulations of The Football Association.

9. PUNISHMENTS

(a) CAUTIONS ADMINISTERED ON THE FIELD OF PLAY

- (i) If a player accumulates five cautions in any Competition between the opening day of the Playing Season and the 31st December in the same Season, he will be suspended automatically for a period covering: -

One First Team Match plus a fine of £20

- (ii) If a player accumulates five cautions in any Competition between the opening day of the Playing Season and the last day of the same Season, he will be: -

“Warned as to his Future Conduct”

- (iii) A player who has already been subject to disciplinary action as a result of receiving five cautions and then goes on to receive a further five cautions during the same Season, will be subject to the following punishments: -
- (iv) If a player accumulates ten cautions in any Competition between the opening day of the Playing Season and the second Sunday of April in the same Season, he will be suspended automatically for a period covering: -

Two First Team matches plus a fine of £20

If in the final match before the second Sunday of April a player accumulates his tenth caution in any Competition since the opening day of the Playing season and then receives a second caution in the same match and consequently is dismissed, the player will be suspended automatically for a period covering Two First Team Matches plus a fine of £20. This two match suspension will automatically apply in such cases, instead of the one match automatic suspension which would otherwise apply to a player who is sent off for receiving two cautions in the same match.

- (v) If a player accumulates ten cautions in any Competition between the opening day of the Playing Season and the last day of the same Season, he will be: -

“Severely Censured and Warned as to his future Conduct”

- (vi) If a player accumulates fifteen cautions in any Competition between the opening date of the Playing Season and the last day of the same Season, he will be suspended automatically for a period covering: -

Three First Team matches plus a fine of £20

- (vii) A player who has already been subject to disciplinary action as a result of receiving five, ten and fifteen cautions, and who goes on to receive 20 cautions in the same Season, shall be required to attend a meeting of a Regulatory Commission, within 14 days of the date of the last caution. The members of a Regulatory Commission shall have the power to deal with the player in such manner as they deem fit. The same procedure will apply for every further five cautions received by the player.
- (viii) Any period of suspension arising from cautions shall commence on the 14th day following the date of his last offence. The suspension shall cover all domestic League, League Cup, FA Challenge Cup and Trophy matches and Friendly matches until such time as his Club's recognised Senior Team has completed the number

of matches appropriate to the punishment in approved Competitions during the period covered by its opening match in the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League and ending with the final match in which the Club is playing in a domestic Competition organised by The Football Association, the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian /Northern Premier/Southern League or matches concerning a Club's nominated County Senior Cup Competition.

- (ix) Any period of suspension or part thereof which remains outstanding at the end of a Season must be served at the commencement of the next following Season.

(b) PLAYERS SENT OFF UNDER LAW 12 (7)

Subject to the provision of 8(a)(iv) above, a player who is dismissed from the Field of Play for receiving a second caution in the same match will be suspended automatically from all domestic League, League Cup, FA Challenge Cup and Trophy matches and Friendly matches commencing on the 14th day following the match in which he was sent off, until such time as his Club's recognised Senior Team has completed one match in an approved Competition during the period covered by its opening match in the Football Conference (North and South Divisions) /Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League and ending with the final match in which the Club is playing in a domestic Competition organised by The Football Association, the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/ Northern Premier/Southern League or matches concerning a Club's nominated County Senior Cup Competition **plus a fine of £20**

(c) PLAYERS SENT OFF UNDER LAW 12 (4) and (5)

A player who is dismissed from the Field of Play for denying a goal or an obvious goalscoring opportunity by physical means or by handling the ball, will be suspended automatically from all domestic League, League Cup and FA Challenge Cup and Trophy matches and Friendly matches commencing on the 14th day following the match in which he was sent off, until such time as his Club's recognised Senior Team has completed **one match** in an approved Competition during the period covered by its opening match in the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League and ending with the final match in which the Club is playing in a domestic Competition organised by The Football Association, the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/ Northern Premier/Southern League or matches concerning a Club's nominated County Senior Cup Competition **plus a fine of £20**

(d) PLAYERS SENT OFF UNDER LAW 12 (6)

A player who is dismissed from the Field of Play for using offensive or insulting or abusive language/gestures whether he has previously been cautioned in the match or not, will be suspended automatically from all domestic League, League Cup, FA Challenge Cup and Trophy matches and Friendly matches commencing on the 14th day following the match in which he was sent off, and until such time as his Club's recognised Senior Team has completed **two matches** in approved Competitions during the period covered by its opening match in the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League and ending with the final match in which the Club is playing in a domestic Competition organised by The Football Association, the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League or matches concerning a Club's nominated County Senior Cup Competition **plus a fine of £30**

(e) PLAYERS SENT OFF UNDER LAW 12 (1), (2) and (3)

A player who is dismissed from the Field of Play for Violent Conduct, Serious Foul Play or spitting at an opponent or any other person whether he has previously been cautioned in the match or not, will be suspended automatically from all domestic League, League Cup, FA Challenge Cup and Trophy matches and Friendly matches commencing on the 14th day

following the match in which he was sent off and until such time as his Club's recognised Senior Team has completed **three matches** in approved Competitions during the period covered by its opening match in the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League and ending with the final match in which the Club is playing in a domestic Competition organised by The Football Association, the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern League or matches concerning a Club's nominated County Senior Cup Competition **plus a fine of £40**

(f) **ADDITIONAL SENDINGS OFF**

Players dismissed from the Field of Play for a second time in the same Season, in addition to the automatic suspension applicable to the offence, will be suspended for one extra match.

A player dismissed for a third time in the same Season will be suspended for an extra two matches, and so on. A Regulatory Commission, when dealing with a Claim of Wrongful Dismissal (section 5) has the power not to invoke a further one match suspension if it so desires.

(g) **OUTSTANDING SUSPENSIONS**

Any suspension or part thereof which remains outstanding at the end of a Season, must be served at the commencement of the next following Season.

(h) **PLAYERS MOVING BETWEEN CLUBS**

Where a Player moves between Clubs at a time when he is subject to a suspension from playing resulting from either these Disciplinary Procedures or any charge of Misconduct, the following shall apply –

- (a) Until the Player moves, the suspension shall be served by reference to matches completed by the Club that the Player moves from;
- (b) Where the Club that the player moves to competes at the same level as the Club that the player moves from, any remaining period of suspension at the time that the Player moves shall be served by reference to matches completed by the Club that the Player moves to;
- (c) Where the Club that the player moves to competes at a different level from the Club that the player moves from, any remaining period of suspension at the time that the Player moves shall continue to be served by reference to matches completed by the Club that the Player moves from.

For the purposes of this section, Clubs compete at three different levels. Each level is comprised as follows –

- (i) The Premier League, Football League and Football Conference (National);
- (ii) The Football Conference (North and South Divisions), the Isthmian League, the Northern Premier League and the Southern League;
- (iii) Steps 5 to 7 of the National League System, or any other league outside of the National League System which operates a match-based disciplinary system.

This section applies to all moves by Players between Clubs which are completed and evidenced to the satisfaction of the Association, however they occur.

This includes, but is not limited to, all transfers, loans and the expiration of loans, and Players whose registration is cancelled by the Club that the Player moves from, where that Player is subsequently registered by the Club that the Player moves to.

(i) **RULE E3 OF THE ASSOCIATION**

A charge of Misconduct (as defined in and) pursuant to Rule E3 of the Rules of The Association may be brought against a Player in relation to an incident whether or not the same incident has been dealt with by the referee and/or pursuant to this Memorandum. In

deciding whether or not to bring a charge under this regulation, The Association will have particular (but not exclusive) regard to the following:

- (a) Any applicable Law(s) of the Game or Rules and Regulations or FIFA instructions and/or guidelines;
- (b) The nature of the incident, and in particular any intent, recklessness, negligence or other state of mind of the Player;
- (c) Where applicable, the level of force used;
- (d) Any injury to any Participant caused by the incident;
- (e) Any other impact on the game in which the incident occurred;
- (f) The prevalence of the type of incident in question in football generally;
- (g) The wider interests of football in applying consistent sanctions.

A Regulatory Commission considering a charge under Rule E3 in such circumstances shall have regard to any punishment imposed under this Memorandum for the same incident when considering any punishment under Regulation 8.1 (Penalties) of the Regulations for Football Association Disciplinary Action.

(j) **PAYMENT TO PLAYERS UNDER SUSPENSION**

Clubs must not pay a player more than his basic wage during the period of a suspension.

(k) **CLUBS IMPOSING FINES**

The responsibility for fining players for field offences is left with the Club, who must notify The Football Association, without delay, the details of the fine in each case.

(l) **RE-ARRANGED MATCHES**

A Regulatory Commission shall have discretionary power to rule that a match shall not count towards the completion of a suspension if it is satisfied that the game has been arranged by the Club with a view to enabling the player to complete his suspension and thus qualify him to play in a specific match.

(m) **COLLECTION OF ADMINISTRATION FEES AND FINES**

- (i) It will be the responsibility of the Club Secretary to collect the £10.00 administration fees from the players concerned and forward them to The Football Association when requested so to do.
- (ii) Fines levied on players must be collected by the Club Secretary from the player concerned and forwarded to The Football Association when requested to do so.

10. DISCIPLINARY ACTION ON CLUBS FOR MISCONDUCT BY THEIR PLAYERS

- (a) Any Club that has six or more individual Players cautioned or Dismissed from the Field of Play in the same match will be offered a Standard Punishment. The sum of £500 will be the Standard Punishment for Clubs in the Football Conference (North and South), and the Premier Divisions of the Isthmian, Northern Premier and Southern Leagues, and a fine of £250 will be the Standard Punishment for all other divisions for the first occasion during the Season. For a second/third/fourth etc. occasion in the same Season, the Standard Punishment on the Club will be a fine of £1000/£500, £1500/£750, £2000/£1000 etc. All clubs offered a Standard Punishment may either accept it or request the opportunity to mitigate at a personal hearing before the Regulatory Commission.

Following such mitigation, the Regulatory Commission may impose, decrease or increase the Standard Punishment as it thinks fit.

- (b) Any Club whose players accumulate a total number of Penalty Points in First Team matches between the start of the Season and 31 December (including any First Team match played on that day) which is 40% or more above the median number of points per game average in the same League, will be required to appear before the Regulatory Commission to explain the players' conduct.

Following such explanation, the Regulatory Commission may order that a visit be made to the Club by representatives of The Association and/or PGM0 or other appropriate body, in order to discuss and/or offer advice on the Club's disciplinary record.

Any Club whose players accumulate a total number of Penalty Points in First Team matches during the whole Season which is 40% or more above the median number of points per game average in the same League, will be required to appear before the Regulatory Commission to explain the players' conduct.

If the Club cannot provide a reasonable explanation for such occurrence, the Club will be liable to be warned and/or fined up to £1,000 for the Premier Divisions and £500 for all other Divisions for having permitted its players to breach, or not having prevented its Players from breaching, the Laws of the Game in contravention of Rule E1(a) of The Association.

Where the Club concerned accumulated a total number of Penalty Points which is between 40% and 50% above the median number of points per game average in the same League, any fine will normally be suspended in whole or in part for a period of one year, unless the Regulatory Commission determines that this is not appropriate, in which case it will be imposed immediately.

Where the Club concerned accumulated a total number of Penalty Points which is more than 50% above the median number of points per game average in the same League, any fine will normally be imposed immediately, unless the Regulatory Commission determines that this is not appropriate, in which case it will be suspended in whole or in part for a period of one year.

In addition, the Regulatory Commission shall be entitled to order the Club to pay the cost of the Hearing to The Association. Any action taken by the Club to discipline its players under Section 8(j) will be taken into consideration by the Regulatory Commission in its findings.

Any Club required to appear before a Regulatory Commission under this regulation must ensure that its first team manager and one of its Directors or Committee members attend the hearing.

In so far as this Regulation shall apply, the following Points will be recorded against a Club for First Team offences: -

For all recorded First team cautions	-	4 Points
For Sending off under Law 12 (4)(5) & (7)	-	10 Points
For Sending off under Law 12 (1)(2)(3) & (6)	-	12 Points
For First Team players found guilty of Charges Under Rule E3 of The Association	-	12 Points

Where any sending off is subject to a successful claim for wrongful dismissal, no points shall be added to a club's accumulated points total in respect of it.

- (c) Proceeds of fines imposed under this section of the Disciplinary Procedures shall be disbursed as decided by The Football Association.
- (d) A Club required to appear before a Regulatory Commission shall be represented by at least one of its Directors and the Manager.
- (e) The Football Association reserves the right to prefer a Charge against a Club at any time during the Season arising from Field Offences committed by players of the Club, all records will be reviewed to the 31st December annually and Clubs may be ordered to attend a Regulatory Commission to discuss a record that is deemed to be poor at that stage of the Season.

11. ASSAULTS ON MATCH OFFICIALS

Assaults on Match Officials are always regarded by The Association as serious and invariably attract substantial periods of suspension. Where a Match Official has reported an assault against him by a player or official associated with a club in the FA Premier League, Football League or Football Conference National Division, The Association may use the powers set out at Rule E18 of The Association to impose an interim suspension order.

There are three categories of assault for the purposes of the results: -

- (i) MINOR ASSAULTS - for instance, jostling, holding, pushing
- (ii) ASSAULTS CAUSING BODILY HARM - for instance, more forceful degrees of (i) above
- (iii) SERIOUS ASSAULTS - for instance, where serious harm is caused, such as severe bruising or a broken nose.

12. SUSPENSION PENDING MISCONDUCT HEARING

The Football Association shall have the power to order that a Club Official or Player associated with the Football Conference (North and South Divisions)/Isthmian/Northern Premier/Southern Leagues shall be suspended from all or any specific football activity for such period and on such terms and conditions as The Association considers fit (an "Interim Suspension Order").

The Interim Suspension Order shall apply when the Club Official or Player has been charged by The Association in relation to an alleged act of serious Misconduct or with a criminal offence or by the League in connection with serious disciplinary action pursuant to relevant Regulations of the Leagues.

As soon as reasonably practicable, notification of an Interim Suspension Order shall be advised to the Club Official or Player and/or the Club and will be lifted when the charge of Misconduct is dealt with by a Regulatory Commission or the criminal charges are withdrawn or found not to be proved.