



**FOR ALL**

# **SANCTION GUIDELINES**

***CUMULATIVE OFFENCES BY CLUBS –  
AGGRAVATED BREACHES AND CERTAIN OFFENCES  
AGAINST MATCH OFFICIALS***

# SANCTION GUIDELINES

## **CUMULATIVE OFFENCES BY CLUBS – AGGRAVATED BREACHES AND CERTAIN OFFENCES AGAINST MATCH OFFICIALS**

### **SCOPE**

These sanction guidelines only apply in the men's adult game below Step 6 of the National League System and in the women's adult game at Tier 3 and below of the Women's Football Pyramid.

These sanction guidelines also apply to grassroots youth football and for the avoidance of doubt do not apply to any academy or youth team associated with any Club participating in the Premier League, EFL, WSL or FA Women's Championship.

## **1. AGGRAVATED BREACHES**

### **RELEVANT RULES**

E3.1 and E3.2 set out the basis for an "Aggravated Breach".

*E3.1 A Participant shall at all times act in the best interests of the game and shall not act in any manner which is improper or brings the game into disrepute or use any one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour.*

*E3.2 A breach of Rule E3.1 is an "Aggravated Breach" where it includes a reference, whether express or implied, to any one or more of the following :- ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability.*

Rule E3.4 sets out the basis on which a Club can be charged for cumulative Aggravated Breaches committed by two or more Participants from the Club:

"Where two or more Participants from a Club commit any Aggravated Breach of Rule E3.1 in any twelve-month period, regardless of whether any such breach falls within sub-paragraph E3.4, the Club itself will be liable to a sanction imposed by a Regulatory Commission".

### **GUIDANCE ON APPLICATION OF THE APPLICATION OF E3.4**

Any reference to "Club" should be interpreted as meaning each team within the Club, rather than covering all age groups. So, for example, if an U14 and an U16 team within a Club have committed a breach of E3.2, this will not trigger a breach of Rule E3.4. However if a Participant from the same U16 team committed a breach of Rule E3.4 within the next 12 months, this would trigger a breach of E3.4.

However, for youth teams, the intention is to track the same team as it passes through the age groups, so for the purposes of determining liability, the 12 month look back period will include any time spent in a lower age bracket.

## 2. ASSAULTS OR ATTEMPTED ASSAULTS / PHYSICAL CONTACT OR ATTEMPTED PHYSICAL CONTACT AGAINST MATCH OFFICIALS

### RELEVANT REGULATIONS

Paragraph 92.2 of Part D of Section Three of the Disciplinary Regulations

Paragraph 92.2 sets out the basis for a Club's liability:

92 A Club may be liable for a Charge of Misconduct where:

[.....]

*92.2 There have been two occasions during a 12 month period where one or more Participants from a Club commits Misconduct for an offence against a Match Official of the sort described at paragraphs 96.2 and 96.3 below. A Club may also be Charged on the third and every subsequent occasion such a proven offence is committed by one or more of its Participants during a 12 month period.*

***GUIDANCE: Paragraph 92 is only intended to capture behaviour by a specific team within a Club it is not an accumulation of offences across all teams within a Club. For youth teams, the intention is to track the same team as it passes through the age groups, so for the purposes of determining liability, the 12 month look back period will include any time spent in a lower age bracket. Where two or more Misconduct offences against a Match Official take place within the same game, this will be treated as a single "occasion" for the purposes of this paragraph 92.***

Paragraph 96.2 and 96.3 set out which types of assaults against Match Officials are covered by Paragraph 92.2.

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*96.2 Physical contact or attempted physical contact: physical actions (or attempted actions) that are unlikely to cause injury to the Match Official but are nevertheless confrontational, examples include but are not limited to: pushing the Match Official or pulling the Match Official (or their clothing or equipment); and*

*96.3 Assault or attempted assault: acting in a manner which causes or attempts to cause injury to the Match Official (whether or not it does in fact cause injury), examples include, but are not limited to, causing and/or attempting to cause injury by spitting (whether it connects or not), causing and/or attempting to cause injury by striking, or attempting to strike, kicking or attempting to kick, butting or attempting to butt, barging or attempting to barge, kicking or throwing any item directly at the Match Official.*

## 3. STRICT LIABILITY

Breaches of Rule E3.4 and Regulation 92.2 are strict liability offences. This means the only question for a National Serious Case Panel to determine is the question of sanction. This is because whether the underlying offences have been committed is a matter of fact as they have been found proven and as a result either Rule E3.4 or Regulation 92.2 has been triggered.

## 4. SANCTION GUIDELINES

Breaches of Rule E3.4 and Regulation 92.2 are serious offences. The sanctions set out below are significant to try to address serious Misconduct within a Club, but also to act as a deterrent for further offending.

The National Serious Case Panel should impose any sanction it deems to be proportionate based on the Sanction Range and any aggravating or mitigating factors.

### SANCTION RANGE

Below is the Sanction Range for each offence.

All penalties are for immediate effect. Points shall be deducted from league standings as at the date the decision on sanction is made. In the event that all league fixtures have been completed any points deduction shall be applied from the commencement of the following season.

### RULE E3.4

1 <sup>st</sup> breach of Rule E3.4 (two Aggravated Breaches by Participants from a Club)	2 <sup>nd</sup> breach of Rule E3.4 (three Aggravated Breaches by Participants from a Club)	3 <sup>rd</sup> breach of Rule E3.4 (four Aggravated Breaches by Participants from a Club)
3 points to 6 points	4 points to 9 points	6 points to 12 points
Immediate	Immediate	Immediate

### REGULATION 92.2 OF PART D OF SECTION THREE OF THE DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS

1 <sup>st</sup> breach of Reg 92.2 (two 96.2/3 offences by Participants from a Club)	2 <sup>nd</sup> breach of Reg 92.2 (three 96.2/3 offences by Participants from a Club)	3 <sup>rd</sup> breach of Reg 92.2 (four 96.2/3 offences by Participants from a Club)
3 points to 6 points	4 points to 9 points	6 points to 12 points
Immediate	Immediate	Immediate

### MITIGATING FACTORS

- The Club has removed the individual(s) who committed the offences
- The Club has taken meaningful steps to address poor behavioural culture within the club
- The Club has accepted full responsibility for the repeat offences

### AGGRAVATING FACTORS MAY INCLUDE, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- The severity of the offences committed and any sanction imposed in relation to them.
- The Club has not removed the individuals who committed the offences
- The Club has failed to take meaningful steps to address poor behaviour within the Club
- The Club has a poor disciplinary record in general