



## **REGULATION AMENDMENTS 2018/19 SEASON** **STEP 5 AND BELOW**

This document is intended to provide a brief overview of the key Regulation amendments for 2018/19 season for all Clubs operating at Step 5 and below (County FA football).

Please refer to The FA or County FA handbook for the rule or regulation in its entirety and all other changes that may affect you. This is not intended to replace the Association handbook.

In addition to this, The 2018/19 Discipline Handbook will be released in due course.

### **1. Temporary Dismissals (Sin Bins)**

Following the successful Pilot across 31 Leagues for the use of Sin Bins for cautions for Dissent, The FA Council has approved the following:

- Repeat Offenders who receive more than 1 Sin Bin offence in a game and/or are excluded from participation under the Sin Bin criteria will also receive a post-match 1 match ban and £25 fine plus administration fee.

In addition Council approved the following effective from:

#### **2018/19 Season**

- The 31 Leagues who used the system in 2017/18 season will continue to use the same system permanently from now on.
- Leagues/Competitions at Step 7 and below may request to use the Sin Bin system for the 2018/19 Season subject to CFA approval. At this moment in time 60 Leagues have been selected.
- In addition, some Counties have nominated their County Cup Competitions for Sin Bins for Dissent. This is only permitted where the County Cup consists of teams at Step 7 or below only.

#### **2019/20 Season**

- All Leagues and all County Cup Competitions at Step 7 and below to use Temporary Dismissals for Dissent

The use of Sin Bins as approved from IFAB is for Grassroots football only. The FA National Game Board will consider the definition of Grassroots football in this context.

### **2. County FA Discipline Commissions**

The following has been approved:

1. All Commissions must have an independent member (*this was effective from 1st January 2018*) - Independent members will provide opportunities for those not operating within CFA Councils to be incorporated into the discipline process providing their skillset and expertise



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on decisions. Thus, improving the diversity of the Panel and having a true reflection of the personnel within the County.

The definition of an Independent member is where the member has no involvement other than the Disciplinary Panel within a County Football Association Council.

2. All Wing Members will have to be qualified and pass an assessment to sit on Disciplinary cases. This together with previous directives will ensure all personnel involved in the Disciplinary hearings have received training and have been assessed assuring suitability for the role.
3. Commissions are required to produce full written reasons for any serious case that has been considered by a Personal Hearing. A serious case is classified as:
  - Assaults on Match Officials
  - Physical Contact on Match Officials
  - Threatening behaviour towards a Match Official
  - Assault Participant on Participant
  - Any other case where sanction imposed is 10 matches/112 days or greater

### **3. Administration Fee**

The Administration Fee for non-caution offences (send offs and all misconduct cases) will be amended to £15 to account for the additional administration of these cases.  
The Administration fee for caution offences remains at £10.

### **4. Competition Specific Sanctions for Cautions**

For the FA Cup, FA Trophy and FA Vase, the accumulation of yellow cards will be Competition specific. This will operate similar to the Champions League and Europa League, where a player accumulates 2 yellow cards in the competition will miss the next game in that competition.

The caution count will only apply up to and including the Quarter Finals for each competition.

Cautions received in these competitions will therefore not count in the caution tally for the 5/10/15 sanction process.

It should be noted this regulation is for cautions only and dismissals remain unaffected.

### **5. Appealing a County FA Decision**

A participant charged will be able to lodge an appeal against any decision of a County FA, the minimum threshold has been removed and so all decisions found Proven, are subject to appeal by the Participant charged.

All suspensions imposed following a misconduct charge commence 3 days after the date of the hearing with an intention to appeal having to be made within 7 days. (It was 3 days last season but has been increased this season to 7 days).

The full written submissions are still required within 14 days of the written decision.

Any appeal outside of these timelines will not be accepted.

## 6. Mandatory Minimum Sanctions

To ensure consistency nationally, mandatory minimum sanctions have been introduced, an individual who receives a charge below and if found proven, will face as a minimum the sanction below listed. A Commission can increase based upon the aggravating factors that are present.

These are not an entry point.

- Assaults on a Match Official – *5 year minimum sanction (2 years minimum if the player is under 16)*
- Physical contact on a Match official - *84 days & £100 minimum*
- Threatening a match official – *56 days/6 matches & £50 minimum*

## 7. Referee Reporting

Following the introduction of the match based disciplinary system many seasons ago; clubs are only permitted to challenge a dismissal on the basis of a wrongful dismissal.

Currently Referees across the game at all levels when dismissing a player from the field of play are required to write a detailed report of the offence when reporting the dismissal.

The requirement to report the detail of the dismissal is not necessary for the Wrongful Dismissal process that now applies at all levels of the game and has in fact contributed to confusion as to the purpose of the Wrongful Dismissal process.

The ability to claim a Wrongful Dismissal applies where a Club can demonstrate that the decision to send off a player **for the offence** committed was **obviously wrong**.

It has therefore been agreed to amend the reporting process with effect from the start of the 2018/19 season to operate the same as reporting yellow card offences where a specific description of the send-off offence is not required. This change will apply at all levels of the game.

Therefore the referee is only required to report the red card offences as laid out in the laws of the game as follows:

- S1. Serious Foul Play
- S2. Violent Conduct
- S3. Spits at an Opponent or any other person
- S4. Denying the opposing player an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball
- S5. Denies the opposing player an obvious goal scoring opportunity by an offence punishable by a free kick or penalty kick
- S6. Uses Offensive, insulting or abusive language
- S7. Receives a second caution in the same match (This offence also requires the referee to report the caution offence for each caution)

Offences of S2 – Violent conduct will be categorised further with the following categories:

- S2 – Violent Conduct - Head to Head contact

- S2 – Violent Conduct - Elbowing
- S2 – Violent Conduct - Kicking
- S2 – Violent Conduct - Stamping
- S2 – Violent Conduct – Striking
- S2 – Violent Conduct – Biting
- S2 – Violent Conduct – Other Unspecified Behaviour\*

(\* A free text field to capture other Unspecified Behaviour will be available if this option is selected).

### **Extraordinary Reports**

Referees will still be required to write details surrounding extraordinary incidents in the following circumstances.

- a. Where the dismissal offence has a more serious impact than the dismissal itself, the referee will be required to submit the dismissal offence as normal and then add a supplementary extraordinary report clarifying why the dismissal was exceptional. Such examples would be where the offence committed included an aggravated breach such as discriminatory language or behaviour (homophobic, sexist or reference to race/colour/religion/ethnicity etc.) or here there was a serious injury caused by the act of violent conduct.
- b. Where further misconduct happened following the dismissal such as the player refusing to leave the field of play or committed other further acts of misconduct following the dismissal.
- c. Where the offences committed were by non-playing staff or spectators.
- d. All other extra-ordinary incidents.

**FA Judicial Services Department**  
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