# APPENDIX 26

**The *Northamptonshire FA***

# Youth Council Code of Conduct

## Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all Members of The

***Northamptonshire FA's*** Youth Council. The Code applies whenever a Member is:

* 1. Conducting the business of The County Football Association (“the County FA”);
	2. Conducting the business of the office to which they have been elected or appointed; and
	3. When they are acting as a representative or ambassador of the County FA.

## Accountability

You are accountable to the County FA and must exercise your powers as a Youth Council Member in good faith and for the benefit of the County FA, its members, employees and the wider football family. You have important responsibilities as a Youth Council Member and as such you will be held accountable for your actions and your part in reaching decisions.

## Safeguarding

All County FA Youth Council members over the age of 16 must have an in-date FA DBS Check, as well as an in-date FA Safeguarding Qualification. Any members under the age of 16 will be required to complete the online Introduction to Safeguarding module. As with the induction of any staff, the Youth Council will be expected to attend the FA Safeguarding Induction/ Cascade Training at the start of the season. Failure to attend this training will lead to suspension of role until such a time when the induction has been completed.

The FA Safeguarding Code of Conduct is to be signed by all members and adhered to at all times.

Further information on dealing with safeguarding concerns can be found at [**TheFA.com/football-rules- governance/safeguarding/section-2-reporting- concerns**](http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-2-reporting-concerns). You should also familiarise yourself with Guidance note 4 on **page 4**, which gives a template for a County FA Equality Policy.

## Confidentiality

You must ensure that you handle confidential information in accordance with the law and with regard to the best interests and reputation of the County FA. You must not use confidential information for private purposes to harm the County FA or to

maliciously damage the reputation of others or disclose confidential information to the media or any other third party. This obligation continues after you cease to be a Youth Council Member.

Confidential information is any information which comes into your possession as a result of your County FA role which you know or ought reasonably to know is confidential. This does not preclude members of

Council from properly consulting with the bodies which appoint them about policy matters which come before Council or any Committee of Council.

## Press and Media

You are not entitled to discuss any County FA business with the press or wider media on behalf of the County FA, unless it is explicitly part of your remit as a Youth Council Member.

You agree to abide by the Communications Protocol set out in Guidance notes 1 and the end of this Appendix.

If you receive any enquiries from the press or wider media about the County FA which asks for the views of the County FA you agree not to comment and to

pass on the relevant information as soon as reasonably practicable to the County FA members of staff supporting The Youth Council. If you are representing the views of another body as opposed to the County FA on a matter affecting the County FA, this must be made clear to the media.

## Social Media

The County FA must ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. It therefore requires employees using social networking and/or blogging websites to:

* Ensure that they do not conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the County FA including; sharing confidential or sensitive information;

using abusive or vulgar language; re-posting or re-tweeting inappropriate content and use of derogatory language to County FA associates including players or match officials.

* Take due consideration not to allow their interaction on these websites to damage working relationships between members of staff and clients/stakeholders of the County FA.

For full guidance on social media see **Guidance note 2**

at the end of this Appendix.

## Conflicts of interest

Whilst you may properly be influenced by the views of others, including the body that has the right to appoint you as a Youth Council Member, it is your responsibility to objectively decide what view to take, and how to vote, on any question which the Council or committee has to decide. When taking such decisions, you agree to act in the best interests of the County FA and young people, you must fully declare all conflicts of interest

in advance.

You may take part in the consideration of matters that come before Youth Council unless there is a conflict

of interest between any personal or private interest (including those of connected persons) and the County FA’s interest in the matter, in which case you should declare it and preclude yourself from participation. As well as avoiding actual impropriety, you should avoid any appearance of it.

Conflicts may arise not just around or in relevant meetings that you attend. A conflict of interest may exist through your external interests, appointments, employment or investments or those of members of your family or associated companies. You must ensure that you notify any actual or perceived conflicts of interest to the County FA member of staff supporting. If you are unsure of whether or not a conflict exists, you should raise this.

## Diligence

You must be diligent in exercising your powers and carrying out your duties as a Youth Council Member, especially (but not limited to) preparing for and attending meetings. ***Meeting dates are published well in advance and should, therefore take priority over other commitments***. We recognise that there may occasionally be unforeseen circumstances

(such as illness) that may result in missing a meeting. Members should contact the Chairperson and/or supporting member of staff in such instances. It is also expected that members remain on-site for all meetings unless prior agreed.

For full guidance on attendance see **Guidance note 5**

at the end of this Appendix.

When representing The FA County FA Youth Council, you must ensure that you behave in a way that does not compromise the reputation of the group.

## Expenses

All expenses must be approved by a supporting County FA member of staff BEFORE they are incurred. You must ensure that your expense claims are reasonable, accurate and honest and supported by appropriate documentation and that you do not use the County FA’s resources for your own, your family or friends’ gain.

## Gifts and Hospitality

You should not accept gifts or hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence, or be intended to influence, your judgement; or where to do so could

bring discredit upon the County FA. You agree to abide by any Gifts and Hospitality Policy which may be adopted from time to time.

## Leadership

You should promote and support the Principles set out in this Code by leadership and example, always acting in such a way as to preserve confidence in the County FA. You must not knowingly misrepresent the views or policies of the County FA.

## Treatment of Others

You must treat others with respect and dignity (including but not limited to County FA staff) and must not bully, harass, victimise or discriminate against any person(s) or do anything which would cause you or the

County FA to breach any of the equality enactments. Members should always act in accordance with the County FA equality procedures set out in **Guidance note 4** at the end of this Appendix.

## Stewardship

No Code of Conduct can be all-embracing and it is necessary to honour the spirit of the Code as well as its letter. Where questions arise which are not

covered explicitly by this Code, your behaviour should be honest, ethical, impartial and considerate, and dedicated to the development and good management of football in England.

## Betting

You are deemed to be a Participant under The FA Betting Related Integrity Rules and will comply in all respects with those Rules and any replacement of or amendment to them from time to time (see **Guidance note 3** at the end of this Appendix).

## Breach

If you are accused of a breach this Code, the supporting County FA member of staff will lead a disciplinary process in accordance with standard County FA and FA procedures. Furthermore, all members of the County FA Youth Council are representatives of the County FA and stewards of the game. Action will be taken should any playing, or misconduct charges subsequently become proven. You will then abide by the result (subject to

any right of appeal included in that process). You agree to voluntarily vacate your office as a Youth Council Member if so required.

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct:

|  |
| --- |
| Signature: |
| Name: |
| Date: |

### FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Effective date:** |  |
| **Last reviewed:** |  |
| **Reviewed by:** |  |
| **Next review:** |  |

**Guidance note 1 – County FA Youth Council Communications Protocol**

When making external public announcements the following Protocol must be followed:

* The press release or announcement should be approved by a supporting County FA member, preferably the CEO/or the Chairperson. When possible the expertise and support of the Marketing & Communications Officer/Lead should be used.
* The County FA is responsible for putting out the approved release via County FA official channels (e.g. County FA Websites and on Social Media platforms).
* The press release should be circulated as soon as reasonably practicable to the whole Youth Council and County FA Board members.
* No sub-committee of the Youth Council (whether individually or collectively) is to release a media statement without the matter being passed through this protocol.

**Guidance note 2 – Social Media Policy** The County FA acknowledges that blogs and social networking sites provide individuals with a way of sharing their views, expressing their opinions and communicating in a global environment. When you

choose to publish your opinions through a blog, social networking site or other openly accessible medium, you are legally responsible for those opinions. You should therefore be aware that you can be held personally responsible for any commentary that

you post which may be deemed to be defamatory, obscene, discriminatory, libellous or proprietary (whether relating to the County FA, other individuals or any other organisation – including the County FA’s

customers and sponsors). In essence, what you publish or post on the Internet is at your own risk and other parties can pursue legal action against you personally for postings.

For these reasons, you should always take a cautious approach with regard to any material, remarks or characterisations that you post, ensuring that they are not defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, obscene, libellous or overtly derogatory or negative. You

should also ensure that you have the right to use any copyright materials or any other intellectual property rights that you post.

Notwithstanding that you will be personally responsible for what you write or post, where the contents of what you post relates to your work (or work undertaken

by others in the organisation), the County FA may also be vicariously liable for what you publish. You should therefore be aware that if you participate in certain activities (including outside of work) which the County FA considers inappropriate, given your role or position, you may be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy. This includes posting inappropriate content on the Internet.

You may not post on the internet any photography or images of Wembley Stadium or St George’s Park from areas not accessible by the general public and/or that would compromise security. You also must not post photographs or images which either as a result of your uniform, or location, identify you as a representative of the County FA. You should also ensure that you have the express consent to use any photographs of any employees and ex-employees of the County FA. This shall include current or ex Board and County FA Council members.

You may use photographs that are already in the public domain, to the extent that they or the use to which they are put does not bring the County FA into disrepute, and providing that such use is not in breach of any other part of this policy (including the above paragraph). For the safety of all those employed by the

County FA, care must be taken in relation to the posting of personal data. Work based contact details must

not be posted on sites used for non-work purposes. Permission must be sought from either the Legal, HR team or your Manager to post your own or colleagues work based contact details on the Internet.

**Guidance note 3 – Betting & Gambling** Betting and gambling on the County FA premises is not allowed, including via the telephone or the Internet, except for occasional Sweepstake with the permission of your County FA staff member.

Additionally, you should not bet or gamble on any football related activity or issues where there may be, or may be reason to suspect, knowledge of confidential information due to your position at the County FA a potential conflict of interest.

We are sure you recognise that in some circumstances betting may result in unfavourable personal publicity, as well unfavourable publicity for the County FA

and The FA. The passing of, or use of, confidential

information due to your position at the County FA is prohibited. Any betting on football-related activities or issues could lead to suspicion of the use of such information. Such activity therefore must be avoided.

Unless it is your role to do so, it is a breach of contract to provide statistical or forecasting data to third parties for any purpose, particularly for any purpose involving gambling or betting. A breach of these requirements could result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

## Guidance note 4 – Equality Policy

As the governing body of English Football in ***Northamptonshire***, the County FA is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the game at every level.

Football belongs to, and should be enjoyed by, anyone who wants to participate in it.

The County FA’s commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of gender, age, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability. The County FA is also committed to promoting equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and by providing access and opportunities for all members of the community.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that the County FA is equally accessible to them all.

The County FA will not tolerate harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of an individual, which for

the purposes of this policy and the actions and sanction applicable is regarded as discrimination. This includes sexual or racially based harassment or other

discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal. The County FA will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs.

The County FA is committed to taking positive action where inequalities exist, and to the development

of a programme of ongoing training and awareness raising events and activities in order to promote the eradication of discrimination and promote equality within football.

The County FA is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all employees and requires all employees to abide and adhere to these policies and the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 as well as any amendments to this act and any new legislation.

The County FA commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims, when it is brought to their attention, of unacceptable behaviour or discrimination on the above grounds and where such is found to be the case, a requirement that the practice stop, and sanctions imposed as appropriate.

## Guidance note 5 – Attendance Policy

### Policy Statement

The County Football Association has high expectations for all of its Youth Council members, and member attendance is closely linked to successful outcomes.

Attendance at all meetings, events and activities as organised by the County FA is considered critical

in helping members achieve their full potential individually and collectively and for serving the local game effectively.

The County FA has a responsibility to know which members are attending and a duty of care for young adults when representing the County FA Youth Council.

The County FA also recognises the importance and positive impact that excellent attendance can have on a members’ potential to develop, achieve and succeed.

It is therefore the responsibility of every member to attend all pre-organised dates as set out and communication at application stage and through any subsequent agreed amendments. Applying for the programme is considered a commitment by each member that they will participate fully in the scheduled programme.

Members should be punctual for all meetings and events and ready to contribute, demonstrating evidence of advance planning and self-management. The importance and expectations around attendance and punctuality will be communicated at induction stage (first meeting) and closely monitored.

### Known (authorised) absence

The County FA recognises that in certain circumstances, some absences are unavoidable, and we endeavour to be caring and supportive towards individual cases.

Known absences may include;

* Illness
* Medical appointments which cannot be arranged outside of the scheduled programme
* A job interview
* Attendance at the funeral of a close relative
* Care responsibilities

The above is not an exhaustive list of known absences; the County FA reserves the right to decide what is

and is not acceptable. In doing so, the County FA will consider what a reasonable employer would be prepared to accept.

Members may be asked on occasions to provide evidence for known absences.

### Procedures for requesting absence

If members are unable to attend for any reason or need to miss any part of an arranged event, they must:

1. Contact the Chairperson in advance to request absence and where possible offer possible solutions.
2. Make any such requests at least two weeks in advance, wherever possible, to enable sufficient time for County FA staff to change plans, amend bookings and avoid unnecessary costs.
3. Propose the efforts to be made to catch up with missed involvement, at the time of request, and agree this with the Chairperson.

All members must recognise that, in signing this Code of Conduct, lateness and absenteeism will be challenged in a fair and appropriate manner.

Failure to attend without prior agreement will automatically result in the absence being considered as unauthorised and the Disciplinary Procedure may be used.

### Programme Target

The minimum expectation for attendance will be ***[75%]*** attendance from all pre-scheduled activities and events.

At quarterly intervals, attendance will form one of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used as part of the quality monitoring and improvement process by managers.

Attendance which falls below the programme target will be discussed with individuals.

### Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The County FA will review the Attendance Policy every two years or sooner to take account of any new

guidance, member feedback or best practice documents.