



**ENGLAND  
FOOTBALL**

# **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FA UNDERSTANDING CHARGES**

**IF YOU OR YOUR CLUB HAVE BEEN CHARGED BECAUSE OF AN INCIDENT WHICH TOOK PLACE IN GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL, THIS MAY POSE SEVERAL QUESTIONS. THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST WITH SOME OF THE GENERAL KEY POINTS SURROUNDING CHARGES, AND SO MAY NOT BE RELEVANT TO EXPERIENCED CLUB SECRETARIES FOR EXAMPLE.**

If you have other questions specific to your own charge, please email these to [Discipline@NottinghamshireFA.com](mailto:Discipline@NottinghamshireFA.com)

- When a charge is raised in the Whole Game System, your Club Secretary will receive an email from the Nottinghamshire FA Discipline inbox which contains:
  - o The Case Pack so far,
  - o The Charge Letter,
  - o An outline of timeframes relevant to the case, including the charge response deadline and information regarding whether this is an isolated charge or if anyone else has been charged.
    - An example of what is known as a 'Consolidated Case (multiple charges from the same match/situation)' is when both Clubs involved in a fixture receive E20 charges as they have both been involved in a Mass Confrontation.
- The first thing you should do is read the Charge Letter. This explicitly outlines the circumstances for which you have been charged.
  - o It is important to understand the charge completely. You may have been charged for one specific incident, multiple incidents, or the whole Match in question. Please find an example of a charge below:

The details of the charge are as follows:

Details: Home Team are hereby charged with misconduct for a breach of FA Rule E20.1 in respect of the behaviour of Players, Spectators and/or Club Officials in the above fixture. It is alleged that during the fixture individuals linked to Home Team became involved in a mass confrontation with individuals linked to away team.

Enclosed with this charge is the evidence in which the County will rely on.

If the case is found proven, when reaching any decision on sanction, the Commission will consider any aggravating or mitigating factors and refer to the FA Sanction Guidelines below. They will also determine whether the offence is considered in the Low, Medium or High category.

For this offence, the Sanction Guidelines are as follows:

Outside National League System (Except Youth)

1. Low: 0 - £50 fine
2. Medium: £25 - £75 fine
3. High: £75 - £150 fine

The Commission may also impose a sanction above the guidelines where appropriate to do so based on the evidence of the case.



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- As you can see from the example outlined above, Home Team's charge reads "It is alleged that during the fixture individuals linked to Home Team became involved in a Mass Confrontation with individuals linked to Away Team". Therefore, in this instance, Home Team have received a specific charge (with the incident in question being a Mass Confrontation).
  - As the Club Secretary of Home Team, thinking about this charge you would be only thinking about the alleged Mass Confrontation quoted in the Charge Letter, as this is what you will be responding to as a charge response later. Some issues this may pose are addressed in the "Other Points" section at the bottom of this guidance document.
- Another point to take from above is the fact that the possible sanctions are also included below the charge letter. It is appropriate to note that these are guidelines and can be exceeded at a hearing if the panel feel it necessary, but most of the time the sanction will sit somewhere within these.
  - Previous offence history is the most common reason for panels going above a charge's guidelines. Offence history at a hearing only take into consideration the past 5 years, and only relate to the same charge as the one being heard (E3, E20 etc).

***Please see the "Responding to Misconduct" Guidance document on how to respond to your Charge.***

## **OTHER POINTS:**

- A common misconception within charges, especially E20 (Club) charges, is that a Team/Club shouldn't have been charged if they did not start the incident, such as a Mass Confrontation:
  - If you are involved in the alleged incident in any way, even if not the aggressor, the charge being raised against you is valid. It is important to remember that you can mitigate a charge with statements of explanation in response to the charge which will be included in the case pack delivered to the Discipline Panel (if they are submitted before the deadline). Mitigating statements and responding guilty to charges levied against you go in your favour at hearing and reduce sanctions.
- Once a charge is heard, the outstanding case which you have will also then contain the Results Letter. Details of the outcomes and how to appeal these are contained within the Results Letter. This is important to note, as appeals regarding results are not made to the County FA, they go directly to The FA.
- Everything regarding charges goes through Club Secretaries. If you believe you have been charged for an incident but do not have the documentation, check with your Club Secretary as they will have received the email notification relating to your charge when they are raised on the Whole Game System.
- For match-based suspensions, these will not lift until the matches which you missed as part of your suspension are inputted onto the Whole Game System. Please see the "Suspension Match Guidance" document for information on how to do this.

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