



St Anne's Waterford Tennis Club Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure/Policy

St Anne's Waterford Tennis Club are committed to providing the best possible service. However, there may be times when that has not been achieved and the following complaints and procedures/policy applies to all members whatever their age.

Any member who believes the conduct of another member is contrary to the Constitution of the Club or to the Club's Child Protection & Good Practice Guidelines or to Governing Body Regulations, or whose conduct is likely to bring the club into disrepute, may inform any member of the General Committee in writing.

All members have rights including:

- the right to have your say and be listened to
- the right to complain if you are not happy about something we have done.
- We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly and confidentially.
- We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with the parents and members of staff as appropriate.
- The complaint should be in writing to the Secretary or Club Children's Officer and should be responded to within 5 working days

A Complaint must be made within 14 days of the date of the alleged incident (save where Exceptional circumstances are proven to the satisfaction of the relevant Hearings Committee). It must be in writing. It must refer specifically to an incident(s) and it must specify the Rule (Refer to *Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures*) allegedly broken.

If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with any aspect of the club they should first of all seek to resolve the issue informally by:

- Discussion with the coach or committee member
- If the issue is unresolved or reoccurs, they should put their complaint in writing to the Chairperson
- The Chairperson will then nominate a committee member to meet with the parents and manager/leader (as appropriate) to try and resolve the issue at minimum by the next working week.
- Written records of discussion and agreements made will be kept of this meeting and copies made available to parents, manager/leader, or other involved staff (as appropriate). If the issue remains unresolved, it may be necessary to form a hearing committee to mediate the complaint.

The Hearings Committee shall deal with all Complaints, Disciplinary Action and Objections as these are defined in the Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures. The committee should consist of a representative from the General Committee, the Club Children's Officer and ordinary registered members of the club.

If the complaint involves suspected abuse or a criminal offence the children's officer/designated person should be consulted, and the committee disbanded. The statutory authorities will then be informed.

- The hearing committee should review any relevant paperwork and hold any necessary meetings with all parties to proceed with complaints into any incident of suspected misconduct that does not relate to child abuse. It should, as soon as possible, inform the General Committee of the progress of the disciplinary process. This should be done within 10 working days.
- The hearing committee should furnish the individual with the nature of the complaint being made against him/her and afford him/her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing, but usually at a meeting with the hearing committee.
- Written confidential records of all complaints should be safely and confidentially kept and club procedures should be defined for the possession of such records in the event of election of new officers.
- Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the hearing committee should notify the member of any sanction being imposed. The notification should be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to the parents/ carers.

Disciplinary Procedure:

Where a complaint is deemed of appropriate severity by the General Committee, the General Committee have the right to invoke the disciplinary procedure. The General Committee will have the following options at its disposal under the disciplinary procedure.

1. Impose a fine where applicable. The member being fined will be informed in writing of the amount and the date which it must be paid. All fines will be paid to the Treasurer. Failure to pay the fine will result in further options being invoked.
2. Impose a period of suspension for a defined period.
3. Terminate the membership of the person as outlined in the Constitution. During the period of suspension, the member is suspended from all activities at, or on behalf of St Anne's Waterford Tennis Club and therefore shall be ineligible to participate as a member, in affairs of the Club. The member shall be informed in writing of the reasons for the suspension and the date from which the suspension shall commence. The member may invoke the appeals procedure. The General Committee has the power to reinstate the suspended member if the decision of the appeals procedure finds in favour of the member and the Honorary Secretary shall inform the member in writing of the date from which he/she is reinstated.

Appeals Procedure:

If the member against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the Hearing committee s/he should have the right to appeal the decision to an appeals committee (independent of a hearing committee). The appeal must be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary within seven days of the member being notified about the outcome of the complaint procedure or disciplinary procedure. It must state the date of the decision being appealed, the aspects of the decision being appealed and the grounds of appeal. It should include all relevant documentation

- The chairperson of the appeals committee should be a member of the Management Committee. The appeals committee should consult with the Club Children's Officer in relation to issues of child welfare and codes of conduct.
- The appeals committee should have the power to confirm, set aside or change any sanction imposed by the hearing committee.
- If any party is not satisfied with the outcome the matter can be referred to the Provincial Branch of Tennis Ireland.
- A Disciplinary Action may be initiated by a Leader or Official (as defined in the Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures) or by the Chairperson of the Hearings Committee.

Efforts to resolve the issue at local level should be exhausted before the Branch or indeed the National Governing Body is engaged in attempts to resolve the matter.

DEFINITIONS (extracts from the Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures)

Complaint: means any written complaint made against any Participants, Individual Associate, Member, or Branch or Tennis Ireland or any subcommittee therein within the meaning of clause 3.2 of the Procedures

Disciplinary Action means the steps undertaken in initiating, investigating, prosecuting and administering disciplinary misconduct by a Participant, Individual Associate, Member, Branch and Tennis Ireland.

Hearings Committee means the Member, Branch or Tennis Ireland hearings committee appointed by the executive committee or boards to administer and hear Complaints, Objections or Disciplinary Actions.

Leader means the coach, manager and/or team leader that has responsibility for Participants at a particular Event.

Objection means any objection to the result of a fixture at an Event on the grounds of eligibility.

Official means any person who referees, umpires or officiates at an Event.

Participant means any athlete or assistant such as a doctor, physiotherapist, parent, coach, trainer, mentor, psychologist, manager, advisor, agent or representative that accompanies an athlete to an Event.

The "Rules" referred to above include the following:

- Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures
- Memorandum and Articles of Association of Tennis Ireland
- The Rules of Tennis
- Regulations for the Conduct of Official Tournament