

Disciplinary and Complaints Policy



Version History

No.	Date	Description
Final version 1.0	November 2025	Final version of the <i>Touch Switzerland Disciplinary and Complaints Policy</i> after integrating comments from the Board review

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the framework for handling disciplinary matters and complaints within Touch Switzerland. It ensures all issues are addressed fairly, transparently, and in a timely manner, promoting the integrity of the sport.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members, officials, players, coaches, spectators, and other stakeholders involved in activities governed by Touch Switzerland. It includes disciplinary issues arising during or outside competitions and complaints related to conduct, governance, safety, or equity.

3. Key Principles

- **Fairness:** All parties will have the opportunity to present their case.
- **Confidentiality:** Complaints and disciplinary matters will be handled in confidence unless the disclosure is required by law or the complainant provides their consent.
- **Transparency:** Decisions will be clearly communicated to all involved parties.
- **Timeliness:** Issues will be resolved as quickly as practicable.
- **Respect:** All individuals involved in complaints and disciplinary matters will be treated with dignity, fairness, and consideration throughout the process, regardless of the outcome.

Note: Where Touch Switzerland is unable to meet indicative timelines provided in this policy, the person(s) who initiated the disciplinary review will be informed of the delay along with an expected timeframe.

4. Disciplinary and Complaints Process

4.1 Triggers for Action:

Disciplinary action:

- In-game violations (e.g., unsporting behavior, offensive language, or physical altercations).

- Out-of-game violations (e.g., breaches of codes of conduct, bringing the sport into disrepute).

Complaints:

- Issues related to conduct, governance, safety, or equity.

4.2 Reporting

Incidents or complaints must be reported to the Touch Switzerland Executive Committee or Tournament Organizer. It is recommended to use the general Touch Switzerland email: info@touchswitzerland.ch Anonymous complaints are discouraged as they limit the ability to investigate fairly.

Any member, official, referee, coach, player, or other stakeholder involved in activities under the governance of Touch Switzerland can initiate a disciplinary process.

4.3 Preliminary Review

The case is reviewed by a member or members of the Executive Committee. This involves assessing the report to determine if the alleged behaviour, if proven, would constitute a breach of policy or the code of conduct. The member(s) of the Executive Committee may also interview the parties involved to support their review.

The review may conclude that further action is warranted if the reported behaviour appears to violate the Code of Conduct, threatens participant safety, or undermines the integrity of Touch Switzerland.

The case may be dismissed if the behaviour does not constitute a policy violation, lacks sufficient evidence, or falls outside the jurisdiction of Touch Switzerland.

The decision will be communicated to parties involved in the proceedings.

The Executive Committee aims to complete the preliminary review and communicate the decision of each case within two weeks of receiving the report.

4.4 Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, parties are encouraged to resolve issues informally with support from their clubs (if applicable) or from an individual(s) designated by the Executive Committee.

Examples of informal resolutions include:

- **Direct Discussion:** Facilitating a conversation between the parties to clarify misunderstandings or agree on behavioral changes.
- **Mediation:** Engaging a neutral third party to help the individuals involved reach a mutually acceptable agreement.
- **Apology:** Encouraging one party to offer an apology for their actions or words. This may occur alongside other informal resolution measures.

Informal resolutions are voluntary and require the consent of all parties involved. They aim to address concerns promptly and effectively without initiating formal disciplinary or complaints procedures.

Where the informal resolution is facilitated or supported by an individual(s) designated by the Executive Committee, the individual(s) will provide a brief written record to the Executive Committee noting the resolution took place and summarizing the outcome.

4.5 Formal Resolution

When informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, a formal process is initiated. The specific mechanism will depend on the nature and severity of the complaint. Formal resolution options include:

4.5.1 Disciplinary Panel Review:

4.5.1.1 Disciplinary Panel Process

The Executive Committee contacts the individual(s) who initiated the disciplinary process and any witnesses to provide evidence. The evidence is provided by the Executive Committee to the subject of the disciplinary process, who is given an opportunity to respond.

A panel of three or five impartial individuals is appointed by the Executive Committee, at the discretion of the Executive Committee. It can include Board members, Executive Committee members, and other impartial individuals (from within or outside of Touch Switzerland). The panel is convened to review the case including evidence submissions. It may request further information or interviews with those involved in the case. The panel decide on sanctions, considering severity, intent, and mitigating factors.

The Disciplinary Panel Review process aims to be undertaken and completed within six weeks of its initiation. If this is not possible, the person who initiated the disciplinary review will be informed of the delay along with an expected timeframe.

4.5.1.2 Actions resulting from the Disciplinary Panel Review

The Disciplinary Panel may impose one or more of the following actions:

- **No Further Action:** If the panel finds insufficient evidence to support the allegations.
- **Verbal or Written Warning:** For minor violations, emphasizing expected behavior.
- **Suspension:** Temporary removal from participation in Touch Switzerland activities, specifying the duration.
 - **Domestic Suspension:** Exclusion from participating in domestic events under the governance of Touch Switzerland.
 - **International Suspension:** Exclusion from representing Touch Switzerland in international competitions or events.
- **Ban:** Permanent or long-term exclusion from Touch Switzerland activities.
 - **Domestic Ban:** Permanent exclusion from domestic events under Touch Switzerland.
 - **International Ban:** Permanent exclusion from officially representing Touch Switzerland abroad.
- **Mandatory Training or Education:** Requiring the individual to complete courses such as diversity awareness or referee training.
- **Behavioral Agreements:** Establishing clear, written agreements on future conduct to prevent recurrence of the issue.
- **Coaching or Mentoring:** Providing guidance to the involved individuals to better understand and adhere to expected standards of conduct.
- A combination of any of the above measures or any other measures determined by the Disciplinary Panel.

Once a decision has been reached by the Disciplinary Panel, the outcome will be promptly communicated to all individuals involved in the matter. This includes the complainant (if applicable), the individual subject to the disciplinary process, and any relevant stakeholders with a direct role in enforcing the decision, such as team selectors, coaches, or referee managers, will be informed of any suspension or ban where necessary.

4.5.1.3 Fast-Track Process for Tournaments:

For urgent cases, such as those affecting ongoing matches, decisions may be made on-site by a Touch Switzerland-appointed representative acting as the tournament organizer. If no TS representative is present, the Tournament Host may take temporary action consistent with this policy. Full disciplinary reviews may follow post-tournament if necessary.

4.5.2 Internal Reviews:

This mechanism is used when the complaint pertains to Touch Switzerland's governance or operational decisions.

An internal review by the Executive Committee may be conducted to assess the complaint and determine an appropriate resolution. Any Executive Committee members who were involved in the governance or operational decision that is the subject of the complaint are excluded from conducting the internal review.

The Internal Review process aims to be undertaken and completed within six weeks of its initiation.

4.5.3 Referral to External Authorities:

Complaints involving criminal conduct, such as assault or harassment, will be referred to law enforcement or relevant regulatory bodies.

Touch Switzerland will cooperate fully with external investigations and provide support to all involved parties as appropriate.

4.6 Outcome Communication

Decisions, including any imposed actions, will be promptly communicated to all relevant parties, including the complainant (if applicable), the subject of the process, and any stakeholders such as team managers or coaches.

5. Appeals Process

5.1 Who Can Appeal:

Any individual or entity subject to a disciplinary decision or complaint resolution, the individual who raised the complaint, or any other affected party has the right to appeal the outcome.

5.2 Appeals Scope:

Appeals can challenge:

- The fairness or appropriateness of a disciplinary decision or sanction.
- The adequacy of a complaint resolution.

5.3 Appeals Procedure:

First Level Appeal:

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Touch Switzerland Executive Committee within 14 days of the initial decision. It is recommended to write to the general Touch Switzerland email: info@touchswitzerland.ch
- The Executive Committee, excluding any members who were involved in the original decision, will review the appeal.
- The appellant and other relevant parties may present their cases to the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee will decide to uphold, amend, or overturn the original decision and will communicate their decision in writing, including the rationale. The Executive Committee aims to complete its appeal review and communicate its decision within 6 weeks of receiving the appeal.

Second Level Appeal:

- If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the first appeal, they may escalate the appeal to the Board of Touch Switzerland.
- Appeals to the Board must be submitted in writing within 14 days of the Executive Committee's decision.
- A Group of three or five Board members is appointed by the Board, excluding any individuals involved in previous decisions, to conduct a final review of the case.
- The appellant and relevant parties may present their cases, and the Group will issue a final decision, which will be binding and not subject to further appeal within Touch Switzerland. The Group aims to complete its review and communicate its decision within 6 weeks of receiving the appeal.

5.4 Finality:

The decision of the Board of Touch Switzerland on any appeal is final and binding within the framework of Touch Switzerland, concluding the internal appeals process. However, parties may seek further recourse by appealing to the Federation of International Touch (FIT), where permitted by FIT.

6. Safeguards for Minors

Individuals under 18 involved in disciplinary matters or complaints must have a parent/guardian present.

Processes will prioritize the individual's well-being and minimize stress.

7. Recordkeeping

All records of disciplinary matters and complaints will be securely and confidentially maintained by Touch Switzerland.

8. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed within a maximum of 5 years from the date of approval by the Board of Touch Switzerland and confirmed, revised, or withdrawn.

Annex A - Touch Switzerland Complaints Form

Section 1: Complainant Details

- Name: _____
- Contact Information:
 - Email: _____
 - Phone: _____

- Role in Touch Switzerland (e.g., player, coach, parent, volunteer):

Section 2: Complaint Details

- Date of Incident: _____

- Location of Incident: _____

- Names of Individuals Involved (subjects of the complaint):

- Nature of Complaint:
 - Inappropriate Behavior
 - Breach of Code of Conduct
 - Governance Issue
 - Safety Concern
 - Other (please specify): _____

- Details of the Incident:

Section 3: Supporting Information

- Witness Details (if applicable):
 - Name: _____
 - Contact Information: _____

 - Evidence Provided (e.g., emails, photos, reports):
 - Yes
 - No
- If yes, please list the evidence provided:

Section 4: Desired Outcome

- What would you like to happen as a result of this complaint?:

Section 5: Confidentiality

- Do you wish to remain anonymous?:
 - Yes
 - No
- *(Please note: Remaining anonymous may limit the ability to fully investigate your complaint.)*

Section 6: Declaration I declare that the information provided in this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Touch Switzerland Use Only

- Date Received: _____
- Received By (name): _____
- Next Steps:

Annex B - Touch Switzerland Disciplinary Notice

Date: _____
To: _____
Role/Position: _____
Contact Information: _____

Subject: Notice of Disciplinary Action

Details of Incident:

- Date of Incident: _____
- Location: _____
- Nature of Alleged Offense:
 - Unsporting behavior
 - Breach of code of conduct
 - Offensive language or actions
 - Physical altercation
 - Other (please specify): _____
- Summary of Allegations:

Next Steps:

- You have the opportunity to respond to the allegations. Please provide evidence in writing or present witnesses to the Executive Committee of Touch Switzerland within 14 days of the date of notification.
- A disciplinary panel will then review this matter.

Acknowledgment:

Please confirm receipt of this notice by signing below and returning a copy to the Executive Committee of Touch Switzerland.

Signature: _____
Date: _____

Annex C - Touch Switzerland Appeals Form

Section 1: Appellant Details

- Name: _____
- Role/Position: _____
- Contact Information:
 - Email: _____
 - Phone: _____

Section 2: Original Decision

- Date of Decision: _____
- Type of Case:
 - Disciplinary
 - Complaint
- Summary of Original Outcome:

Section 3: Grounds for Appeal

- Please select all that apply:
 - Procedural unfairness
 - Inappropriate sanction
 - New evidence available
 - Other (please specify): _____

- Details of Grounds for Appeal:

Section 4: Desired Outcome

Section 5: Declaration I declare that the information provided in this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Official Use Only

- Date Received: _____
- Received By: _____
- Next Steps: