



BRITISH AMERICAN FOOTBALL REFEREES ASSOCIATION LIMITED

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

Disciplinary cases can be broadly separated into two categories - misconduct and unsatisfactory performance. This procedure outlines the process followed when a member is reported for misconduct or unsatisfactory performance. All cases will be investigated by the Disciplinary Committee in all misconduct cases and, when necessary, in unsatisfactory performance cases, the procedures for which are set out below. All reports filed to the Discipline Committee for misconduct, or to the Director of Training for unsatisfactory performance, will be responded to formally to the filer; informing them of a case being heard and, once a case is investigated and completed, the high-level outcome (if any). The Discipline Committee and Director of Training will use their judgement in line with this Procedure. The member has the right to appeal any disciplinary action as laid down in the Regulations of the Company.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Normally where unsatisfactory performance or misconduct occurs, the member will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the following stages of the BAFRA Disciplinary Procedure.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Individual members are not employees of BAFRA and so this disciplinary procedure does not form part of any contract with the individual member. It is merely a guideline that BAFRA will normally adopt in a disciplinary context.

BAFRA reserve the right to initiate the disciplinary procedures at any stage, or to jump stages depending on the circumstances of the case, or to take any clear action short of terminating membership of BAFRA (e.g. change of membership status, for example demotion from the Elite Panel or from Qualified to Associate status), or to terminate or suspend membership of an member guilty of gross misconduct / gross negligence / gross unsatisfactory performance without instituting the disciplinary procedures.

MISCONDUCT

In cases of gross misconduct, the member concerned will be liable to suspension from assignment to games, where appropriate, whilst the matter is investigated by the BAFRA Disciplinary Committee. Summary termination of membership will normally follow where the gross misconduct is proven or BAFRA has reasonable grounds to believe it was committed. In each case, BAFRA will consider the gravity of the offence and any individual mitigating circumstances.

Examples of misconduct include but are not limited to:

- deliberate breach of BAFRA intellectual property rights
- unauthorised destruction of BAFRA property
- theft or attempted theft of monies or property belonging to BAFRA or any individual member
- falsifying BAFRA documents or expense claims
- a criminal offence arising from or related to the members representation of BAFRA (e.g. at a game in uniform, immediately on the way to/from a game, representing BAFRA at a meeting, etc)

- a criminal offence committed at other times serious enough such as to adversely affect BAFRA's reputation or the members suitability to be an official (e.g. violent behaviour)
- drunkenness or being under the influence of illegal drugs whilst at a game in uniform, immediately on the way to/from game, representing BAFRA at a meeting, etc.
- practical joking or horseplay of a kind such as to endanger the health and safety of fellow officials, players, coaches or spectators.
- gross insubordination to BAFRA Directors or wilful disobedience (after due warning) in carrying out their reasonable requests
- excessive rudeness or other unacceptable behaviour to players, coaches, other members or spectators
- Pursuing personal business interests while representing BAFRA

It is stressed that the foregoing does not represent a complete list of possible offences and are only given by way of an example.

SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

If one or multiple members are found to have committed misconduct, a range of sanctions can be applied to the member(s) as set out in the regulations. BAFRA reserves the right to proceed to any combination of sanctions in all cases of serious misconduct which could lead ultimately to termination of membership.

UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

Before an unsatisfactory performance case is raised against a member the following threshold must be met for the procedure below to be applied:

- a) BAFRA would need to receive multiple reports, in writing, outlining concerns about a member's performance (this would usually be to the BAFRA Director of Training) from which the Director of Training would decide whether the Unsatisfactory Performance procedure that appears below should be followed and/or
- b) A poor BAFRA Exam result in line with the Training, Assessment and Review policy and/or
- c) A poor BAFRA Assessment score in line with the Training, Assessment and Review policy

BAFRA considers that the member therefore does not show the requisite skills or aptitude to perform on the field despite the training given and number of games experienced the following procedure will take place.

UNSATISFACTORY DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

A member will be notified by the BAFRA Director of Training of these shortcomings in writing. Should the member wish to appeal this they can do so in writing to the President who will then decide whether the procedure will continue based on the evidence provided by the member.

An opportunity will be provided to improve and a training package offered to achieve this improvement. If the unsatisfactory performance is based around the BAFRA exam score, then the Director of Training will contact the member and offer a support package to meet the individual members need.

If the unsatisfactory performance is based around on-field performance:

- An Assessment is required at the earliest convenience to address the areas of concern and validate the concerns raised
- Once an assessment has been completed, the Director of Training will discuss with the member potential options moving forward. This could take the form of mentoring, buddying, or any measure deemed appropriate by both parties.
- After this is discussed and formalised, a further review will then take place (e.g. video assessment or further in-person assessment - dependent on availability.) Should

there be an improvement in performance, which meets the minimum threshold, then no further action will be undertaken. If some improvement is observed, then the process will be extended.

If there is no improvement, the member will be given a written warning and offered further remedial support before a final review is undertaken.

After the final review if there is still no improvement from the member, then the member will be advised of this in writing. The case will then be referred to the BAFRA Disciplinary Committee with a recommendation to terminate membership. The discipline procedure in the regulations will then be followed.

If membership of BAFRA is terminated, no refund of the BAFRA or BAFRA fee is payable. BAFRA reserves the right to decline a future application for membership from a past member whose membership was terminated under BAFRA's Disciplinary Procedure.

MISCELLANEOUS POINTS

As BAFRA is a small, part-time organisation of volunteers, this disciplinary process will be undertaken by correspondence or virtual meeting. Face to face disciplinary hearings will not normally be held due to cost and time restraints and cannot be insisted upon by the individual member or by BAFRA. If a virtual hearing is held, then the member has the right to be accompanied by an officiating colleague if they wish. At each stage of the procedure, the member will be given the opportunity to explain the alleged misconduct / poor performance.

This Disciplinary Procedure will be made available to all members on the BAFRA website, in the members' handbook. This procedure forms the basic guidelines for disciplinary action. Where disciplinary action against a member is being considered, it is essential that the case should be discussed with the BAFRA General Secretary prior to any action being taken against the member.

NOTES

BAFRA General Secretary will keep notes of action taken on the individual official's file.

APPENDIX A

BAFRA has a responsibility to ensure that its members remain up to date with their rules and mechanics knowledge and perform at an acceptable level on the field. To this end, it sets out the following methodology to address issues of underperformance and the remedial support to be given to the member.

The performance of a member comes under the responsibility of the Director of Training, who will ensure that all cases of alleged underperformance are followed up appropriately.

Underperformance may be brought to their attention in several ways:

- Report from colleagues who have worked with a member
- Report from coaches who have observed the member
- Report from an assessor who has assessed the member
- Report from an appropriate person (usually a BAFRA member) who has observed the member
- A poor BAFRA exam score

The report may be verbal or written and may be backed by video evidence. The threshold for a case to be heard will be more than one such report to start the remedial support process unless it is a gross unsatisfactory case. This is to eliminate the possibility of bias against the member by another person.

Unless the member is deemed to be so dangerous to themselves or others, normally the Director of Training will arrange for an urgent assessment of the member to be conducted by someone not involved

in making the original report(s) and, if possible, by someone who has not previously seen the member work. This assessment is to take place on a size of crew with which the member is used to working and in a position they are used to working. If the reported problem is only with the member working a specific position, then the assessment will take place with them working that position. If necessary, the member should be kept off the field until this assessment has taken place. If possible, some re-training with a mentor should take place at the same time.

Once the assessment has been received, assuming it identifies one or more significant problems, a remedial programme will be put in place for the member. This may involve any or all of the following:

- Further theoretical training
- Further practical training
- A requirement to observe other members at work (e.g. by working a down box at a game)
- A requirement that the member only works at, or does not work at, a specific position or positions
- That the member re-sits the competency exam
- Any other action appropriate to a specific case

Once it is deemed appropriate the member will be re-assessed by a different assessor to see if any improvement has been achieved. This may lead to a further support plan (even if some progress has been made) or to the member being signed off from remedial support. If not signed off, a further assessment will be made after a suitable period of time (after the remedial support has been given). If significant problems still persist, a frank discussion will be held between the member and the Director of Training about whether or not the member should continue as a member. If this does not lead to a resolution, then this will be referred to the BAFRA Discipline Committee