



COMPLAINTS & ESCALATION POLICY

Approved: 15th October 2025

Reviewed:

Aims

± This policy sets out Waikato Hockey's approach to addressing complaints and concerns raised with us.

This policy is to be read together with Waikato Hockey's Policies and Procedures, more specifically the **Code of Conduct; Senior & Junior Division Bylaws; Wellbeing & Protection Policy; and Data Privacy Policy**

These policies can be found by following the link to the Waikato Hockey website
<https://www.waikatohockey.org.nz/about-us/resources-policies/>

Any queries about this or any other related Waikato Hockey policy can be directed to the
ceo@waikatohockey.org.nz

Application

Complaints or concerns can be raised by or about anybody involved in or connected with Waikato Hockey.

Scope: People may raise concerns about any matter not covered by another Waikato Hockey Policy
Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Organisation management issues;
- Health and safety risks;
- Offensive/insulting language or behaviour;
- Conflicts of interest (including favouritism);
- Unsporting behaviour;
- Disrespectful behaviour;
- Inappropriate conduct;
- Discrimination.

Principles:

- Issues should be addressed informally first, if reasonable and safe;
- Multiple avenues should be available for raising concerns;
- Mana and relationships should be preserved;
- It should be easy to raise concerns;
- Clear communication will be maintained;
- Privacy will be respected unless serious circumstances require disclosure. All complaints will be handled in accordance with the NZ Privacy Act 2020 and Waikato Hockey's Data Privacy Policy.

RAISING CONCERNS AND MAKING COMPLAINTS

If your concern involves immediate danger, harm, or illegal activity, please contact New Zealand Police immediately by calling 111. This form is not monitored in real time and should not be used for urgent matters.

Wherever possible, complaints should be dealt with at the lowest appropriate level, and parties are encouraged to try resolving issues informally first.

How a Complaint is Made

Complaints can be made through the Waikato Hockey online [Complaints and Reporting Form](#), and may relate to breaches of the policies and regulations below:

Code of Conduct: A set of standards for everyone involved in Waikato Hockey activities and events, promoting respect, fairness, safety, and integrity. Breaches include behaviour that undermines these principles, such as harassment, discrimination, unsafe practices, or actions that damage the sport's reputation.

Game Bylaws: Rules governing participant behaviour and conduct during official fixtures, including fair play, respect for officials, adherence to match regulations, and avoidance of unsporting or disruptive actions.

Wellbeing & Protection Policy: Outlines our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all participants—especially children and vulnerable individuals

If you are having issues completing, please email ceo@waikatohockey.org.nz

WAIKATO HOCKEY'S PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING INFORMAL CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

Receiving Complaints:

The CEO, a designated staff member, or judicial umpire subcommittee will:

- Acknowledge receipt within **3 working days**;
- Determine whether the complaint falls within the scope of the policy;
- Decide whether to proceed informally or formally. Formal complaints will aim to be resolved within 20 working days unless complexity requires more time.

Proceeding Steps:

The following complaints process will follow principles of natural justice, including impartiality, the right to be heard, timely and transparent communication, and access to relevant information.

Waikato Hockey's proceeding steps will be to:

- Inform complainant and discuss resolution process. Notify parent/guardian if under 18.
- Notify the person complained about. If anonymity is requested by the complainant, WHA to assess the complaint to determine, with regard to the nature of the complaint, whether anonymity is warranted. WHA reserves the right to disclose the identity of the complainant, should such disclosure be deemed to be reasonable, following the investigation of the matter complained about.
- Consider:
 - Nature, seriousness, urgency
 - Existing processes
 - Cultural appropriateness
 - Broader implications
 - Risks and desired outcomes
- Decide:
 - No action
 - Informal resolution process
 - Formal resolution process
- If informal:
 - If appropriate, parties may be invited to resolve the issue informally through discussion or mediation.
 - Informal resolution must be voluntary and respectful of all parties'
- If formal:
 - Appoint decision-maker (independent if needed)
 - Raise matter respectfully, preserving dignity and mana
- Decision-maker:
 - Meet separately with parties (support people allowed)
 - Aim for meetings within two weeks
 - Use phone/video if needed
 - Interview witnesses if necessary

Note: Waikato Hockey may escalate serious health and safety risks even without consent to disclose identity.

Decisions and Outcome:

The decision-maker will:

- Consider all evidence and submissions;
- Make a reasoned decision;

- Communicate the outcome in writing, including:
 - Summary of the issue;
 - Process followed;
 - Decision and reasoning;
 - Any penalties or actions (e.g., apology, education, suspension, removal from role);
 - Appeal options.

APPEALS Appeals

- Parties may appeal the decision within 10 working days of receiving the outcome.
- Appeals will be reviewed by an independent panel or the Board, depending on the nature of the dispute. Operational complaints will be handled by the CEO or designated staff, while governance or CEO-related complaints will be escalated to the Board or an independent panel.

RECORD KEEPING & CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaint records and related information will be managed in accordance with Waikato Hockey's Data Privacy Policy, ensuring confidentiality, secure storage, and appropriate access controls.

INDEPENDENT MECHANISM AVAILABLE

Sports Integrity Commission: Available to all sport and recreation participants. The Sport Integrity Commission is New Zealand's independent body dedicated to promoting fairness, safety, and inclusion across sport and recreation. It provides education, resources, and a confidential complaints service to help organisations and individuals uphold integrity standards.

Visit <https://sportintegrity.nz/> The Sport Integrity Commission should be used for serious breaches, integrity issues, or if the complainant is uncomfortable using Waikato Hockey's internal process.