

IFA Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures

As an international body, the IFA brings together members from different cultures, backgrounds and experiences. Harassment is perceived differently in different cultures. However, the IFA is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment based on respect and members must be sensitive to the different cultures and behavioural norms that make up the IFA community.

IFA recognises that not all persons experiencing harassment will make a formal complaint but this does not reduce the need to create a supportive environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

The term “complainant” refers to the person who experiences harassment. The term “respondent” refers to the person against whom a complaint is made.

POLICY STATEMENT

IFA is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to participate and work in an environment which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices. The IFA hereby restates its commitment to the Olympic Charter and in particular its Fundamental Principles.

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is prohibited by human rights legislation and is considered unlawful in many States of the world.

IFA is committed to providing a sport environment free of harassment on any basis without exception.

APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all IFA Members Federations and IFA regional associations as well as all officials, players, players' entourage and persons involved in the IFA's operations.

This policy applies to harassment which may occur during the course of all IFA business, activities, and events. It also applies to harassment between individuals associated with the IFA but outside the IFA business, activities, and events when such harassment adversely affects relationships within the IFA work and sport environment.

Notwithstanding this policy, every person who experiences harassment has the right to pursue legal recourse, even when steps are being taken under this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Psychological and/or physical harassment takes many forms but can generally be defined as, persistent comment, conduct, or gesture directed toward an individual or group of individuals, which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading, offensive or abusive. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's performance, damaging his or her reputation, dignity and morale and can create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

For the purposes of this policy, any form of harassment is defined as unwelcome, often persistent, attention. It may include particularly, but not limited to, discrimination or harassment on the basis of gender, religious background, race:

- Written or verbal abuse or threats
- Inappropriately oriented comments
- Jokes, lewd comments or innuendoes
- Taunts about body, dress, marital status or sexuality
- Shouting and/or bullying
- Ridiculing or undermining of performance or self-respect
- Sexual, homophobic, racial or other discriminatory graffiti
- Practical jokes
- Intimidating remarks, invitations or familiarity
- Physical contact, fondling, pinching or kissing
- Vandalism
- Offensive phone calls or photos

CONFIDENTIALITY

IFA understands that it can be difficult to come forward with a complaint of harassment and that it can be equally difficult to be wrongly accused or convicted of harassment. The IFA recognises the interests of all parties concerned in keeping the matter confidential.

Therefore, IFA shall not disclose to outside parties the name of the complainant, the circumstances giving rise to a complaint, or the name of the respondent unless such disclosure is required by a disciplinary, legal or other remedial process.

PANEL OF HARASSMENT OFFICERS

The IFA shall appoint at least two persons, who are themselves officials or employees of the organisation, to serve as harassment officers under this policy, provided that no member of the Board of Directors is appointed.

The role of harassment officers is to serve in a neutral, unbiased, independent capacity and to receive complaints, assist in informal resolution of complaints, maintain records and investigate and advise on the steps to be taken in case of formal written complaints. In carrying out their duties under this policy, harassment officers shall be directly responsible to the Executive Board.

The IFA shall ensure that harassment officers receive appropriate training and support for carrying out their responsibilities under this policy.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A person who experiences harassment is encouraged to seek the initial advice of the competition manager or a harassment officer.

The competition manager or harassment officer, as the case may be, shall inform the complainant of the options for pursuing an informal resolution of his or her complaint which are:

- **mediation** where the harassment officer (or officers) will deal directly with the respondent in order to find a suitable solution.
- **arbitration** where the harassment officer (or officers) will hear the complainant and the respondent and facilitate a suitable solution.

- the **right to lay a formal written complaint** under this policy when an informal resolution is inappropriate or not possible.

If a formal complaint is laid, the harassment officer (officers), within 15 days of receiving the formal written complaint, shall submit a report to the Executive Board with the recommendation of further action/s to be taken.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any person against whom a complaint of harassment is substantiated may be severely disciplined based on the findings and recommendations made by the harassment officers.

For the purposes of this policy, retaliation against an individual will not be tolerated for having:

- filed a complaint under this policy; or
- participated in any procedure under this policy; or
- been associated with a person who filed a complaint or participated in any procedure under this policy.

False accusations will be viewed very seriously and disciplinary action will be recommended against individuals who bring such false charges.

The IFA Board of Directors can impose appropriate disciplinary sanctions from warnings, to fines, to suspension and expulsion when a complaint of harassment has been substantiated. The same disciplinary sanctions can be imposed if a false accusation has been substantiated.

APPEALS

Both the complainant and respondent shall have the right to appeal the decision.

A notice of intention to appeal, along with grounds for the appeal, must be provided to IFA Secretary General within 14 days of the complainant or respondent receiving the formal notification of the outcome of the case.

The IFA Secretary General shall forward the appeal to the IFA Court.

REPORTING TO HARASSMENT OFFICERS

Every member of the IFA has a responsibility to play a part in ensuring that the sport environment is free from harassment.

IFA encourages all incidents of harassment to be reported, regardless of who the offender may be.

RESPONSIBILITY

The IFA Board of Directors is responsible for the implementation of this policy. In addition, the Executive Committee is responsible for:

- discouraging and preventing harassment within the IFA;
- investigating formal complaints of harassment in a sensitive, responsible, and timely manner;
- imposing appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures when a complaint of harassment has been substantiated based on the findings of the harassment officers, regardless of the position or authority of the offender;

- providing advice to persons who experience harassment;
- doing its utmost to support and assist any employee or member of IFA who experiences harassment by someone who is not an employee or member of IFA;
- making all individuals involved in the IFA aware of the problem of all forms of harassment, and of the procedures contained in this policy;
- informing both complainants and respondents of the procedures contained in this policy and of their rights under this policy and the law;
- regularly reviewing the terms of this policy to ensure that they adequately meet the organisation's legal obligations and public policy objectives;
- appointing officers and providing the training and resources they need to fulfil their responsibilities under this policy;
- rehabilitate publicly, persons who have been victims of harassment or who have been victims of a false accusation.

Approved by the IFA Board of Directors dated 9 May 2016.