



Bluebirds United Football Club

Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Policy

1. PURPOSE

To ensure that all Committee Members, players, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators associated with Bluebirds United Football Club enjoy an environment free from harassment / discrimination of any kind including sexual harassment.

Bluebirds United Football Club ("the Club") is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all members, players, staff, volunteers, and spectators. This policy outlines the Club's commitment to preventing harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination and provides procedures for addressing complaints.

2. POLICY

Harassment / Discrimination of any kind is not acceptable at Bluebirds United Football Club and complaints related to behaviour of this nature (see definition) will be treated as serious and will be dealt with promptly, confidentially and impartially by the Committee or chosen independent party. No person who lodges a complaint with respect to harassment / discrimination will be disadvantaged because they have made the complaint.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in Club activities, including players, coaches, staff, volunteers, members, spectators, and any other participants. It covers behaviour that occurs at the Club's premises, during Club events, and in any other context associated with the Club.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Harassment / Discrimination:

- Harassment / discrimination is any unwelcome behaviour that demeans, humiliates, or intimidates an individual or group of individuals. It can include verbal, physical, or visual conduct. It can include, but is not limited to:
 - Limiting opportunities, privileges, or benefits
 - Unequal conditions
 - Evaluations based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, religion, disability, or sexual orientation
 - Offensive jokes, slurs, epithets, or name-calling
 - Physical assaults or threats
 - Intimidation, ridicule, or mockery
 - Insults or put-downs
 - Displaying or circulating offensive objects or pictures
 - Unwanted touching or contact

3.2 Sexual Harassment:

- Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can include, but is not limited to:
 - Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, or gestures.
 - Unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing.
 - Display of inappropriate or explicit images.
 - Repeated requests for dates or sexual favours.
 - Any other conduct that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Zero Tolerance:

- The Club has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment/discrimination, including sexual harassment. All individuals involved with the Club are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the dignity and respect of others.

4.2 Responsibility:

- All members of the Club, including staff, players, and volunteers, have a responsibility to report any incidents of harassment/discrimination or sexual harassment. Leaders within the Club, including coaches and board members, have an additional duty to address and prevent such behaviour.

4.3 Confidentiality:

- All complaints and reports of harassment/discrimination will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to conduct a fair and thorough investigation.

5. REPORTING PROCEDURE

5.1 Immediate Action:

- If an individual experiences or witnesses' harassment/discrimination, they should take immediate action by either confronting the behaviour directly (if safe to do so) or reporting it to a Club official.

5.2 Reporting Channels:

- Reports of harassment/discrimination or sexual harassment can be made to any of the following:
 - A coach or team manager.
 - The Club's designated Member Protection Information Officer - MPIO (if appointed).
 - A member of the Executive Committee.
- Reports can be made in person, by phone, or in writing. The Club will also provide an anonymous reporting option, if possible.

5.3 Documentation:

- When a report is made, the individual receiving the report should document the details, including the nature of the incident, the individuals involved, and any witnesses. This

documentation will be used to support the investigation.

6. INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

6.1 Initial Review:

- Upon receiving a report, the Club will conduct an initial review to determine whether the report warrants a formal investigation. If the complaint is deemed valid, a full investigation will be initiated.

6.2 Investigation Team:

- The investigation will be conducted by a team appointed by the Executive Committee, which may include the MPIO, Committee members, or external experts, depending on the nature and severity of the complaint.

6.3 Fair and Impartial Investigation:

- The investigation will be conducted fairly and impartially. All parties involved will have the opportunity to provide their account of events and submit any relevant evidence.

6.4 Timeline:

- The investigation will be completed as promptly as possible, with a goal of concluding within 30 days of the complaint being filed. If additional time is needed, the complainant will be informed of the delay and the reasons for it.

7. RESOLUTION AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

7.1 Findings and Recommendations:

- Upon conclusion of the investigation, the investigation team will provide a report with their findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee.

7.2 Disciplinary Actions:

- If the investigation finds that harassment or sexual harassment occurred, the Club will take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include:
 - Verbal or written warnings.
 - Suspension from Club activities.
 - Termination of membership or employment.
 - Referral to law enforcement, if necessary.
- Disciplinary actions will be determined based on the severity of the incident and in accordance with Club policies.

7.3 Appeals:

- Individuals who are subject to disciplinary action have the right to appeal the decision to the Executive Committee within 14 days of the decision being communicated.

8. RETALIATION

8.1 Protection from Retaliation:

- The Club prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports harassment/discrimination or sexual harassment or participates in an investigation. Retaliation includes any adverse action taken against an individual as a result of their involvement in reporting or addressing harassment/discrimination.

8.2 Consequences of Retaliation:

- Any individual found to have engaged in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership or employment.

9. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

9.1 Training Programs:

- The Club will provide regular training and awareness programs on harassment/discrimination and sexual harassment for all members, staff, and volunteers. This training will include information on recognizing harassment, reporting procedures, and the Club's policies.

9.2 Policy Dissemination:

- This policy will be communicated to all members of the Club and will be made available on the Club's website and in printed form at the Club's premises.

10. POLICY REVIEW

This Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Policy will be reviewed as part of the Club's three-year review cycle by the Executive Committee to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any amendments must be approved by the Executive Committee and communicated to all relevant parties.

11. APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

This policy was approved by the Executive Committee of Bluebirds United Football Club on 20th February 2024 and is effective immediately.

12. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Rev Number	Date	Author	Approver
000	23/01/2024	G.Freier	K.Maitand