



HAPPY VALLEY FOOTBALL CLUB

CODES OF CONDUCT

Introduction

Happy Valley Football Club (HVFC or the Club herein) implement Codes of Conduct to encourage the positive and safe participation in local football by players, officials and spectators alike. The codes are created to help create the optimum environment for the enjoyment of the game for all. All members who join the Club must accept and abide by the applicable codes as a term of membership.

Codes of Conduct

Players

- Agree to follow and abide by all policies as set by Happy Valley Football Club
- Play by the rules and regulations set by the relevant league or association.
- Never argue with an official: if you disagree, discuss the matter with your coach or team manager after the game.
- Treat all facilities and equipment, both home and away, in an appropriate manner
- Be a good sport: applaud all good plays by your team, opponent or the opposition team.
- Treat all players fairly: treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another player.
- Never use inappropriate, explicit or abusive language when representing the Club
- Cooperate willingly: cooperate with your coach, teammates and opponents, without whom there would be no game
- Follow all instructions as given by officials, coaches, team managers or runners.
- Where there is an issue or complaint to be made, approach parties involved respectfully, or follow the appropriate process to formally make a complaint to the Club (see Member Protection Policy)

Coaches (as signed by accredited coaches)

- Agree to follow and abide by all policies as set by Happy Valley Football Club
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all individuals, including refraining from any discriminatory practices on the basis of race, religion, gender, ethnic background or special ability/disability.
- Abide by and teach the AFL Laws of the Game and the rules of the Club and league/association.
- Be reasonable in the demands on the time commitments of the players, having due consideration for their health and well-being.
- Be supportive at all times and refrain from any form of personal or physical abuse or unnecessary physical contact with the players in my care.
- Have due consideration for the varying maturity and ability levels of players when designing practice schedules, practice activities and involvement in competition.
- Stress and monitor safety always.



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- Recognise the significance of injury and sickness, seek and follow trainers and/or physician's advice concerning the return of injured or ill players to training.
- Endeavour to keep informed regarding sound principles of coaching and skill development, and of factors relating to the welfare of players.
- Display and teach appropriate sporting behaviour, ensuring that players understand and practise fair play.
- Display and foster respect for umpires, opponents, coaches, administrators, other officials, parents and spectators
- Ensure that players are involved in a positive environment where skill, learning, and development are priorities and not overshadowed by a desire to win.
- Reject the use of performance-enhancing substances in sport and will abide by the guidelines set forth in the AFL Anti-Doping and Illicit Drugs policies.
- Agree to abide by the AFL Coaches' Code of Conduct.
- Acknowledge that the AFL, or a body affiliated with the AFL, may take disciplinary action if there is a breach of the AFL Coaches Code of Conduct.
- Understand that the AFL, or a body affiliated with the AFL, is required to implement a complaint-handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice in the event of an allegation against me.
- Acknowledge that disciplinary action may include de-registration from the AFL National Coaching Accreditation Scheme

Parents/Spectators

- Agree to follow and abide by all policies as set by Happy Valley Football Club.
- Remember children play sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Encourage children to participate, do not force participation upon them.
- Encourage players to always participate according to the rules.
- Remember children learn best by example – applaud the efforts of all players in both teams.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- Show appreciation of volunteer coaches, officials and administrators – without whom your child could not participate.
- Respect umpires' decisions and teach children to do likewise.
- Be supportive at all times, maintain a positive sideline environment and refrain from any form of verbal or physical abuse or unnecessary physical or verbal contact with the players or officials. Never ridicule or yell at players, oppositions or officials.
- Remember smoking and the consumption of alcohol is unacceptable at junior sport.
- Where there is an issue or complaint to be made, approach parties involved respectfully, or follow the appropriate process to formally make a complaint to the Club (see Member Protection Policy).



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Administration/Officials

- Agree to follow and abide by all policies as set by Happy Valley Football Club.
- Ensure equal participation for all: provide equal opportunities for all regardless of ability, size, shape, sex, age, disability or ethnic origin.
- Suitability of program: ensure that the rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules take into consideration the age, ability and maturity level of the participants.
- Ensure adequate supervision, which must be provided by qualified and competent coaches and officials capable of developing appropriate sports behaviour and skills.
- Stress enjoyment: remember children participate for enjoyment. Play down the importance of rewards.
- Arrange education: develop improved standards of coaching and officiating with an emphasis on appropriate behaviour and skills.
- Promote fair play: ensure parents, coaches, officials, sponsors, physicians and participants understand their responsibilities regarding fair play.
- Modify to suit various levels: modify rules and regulations to match the skill level of participants and their needs.
- Promote respect for opponents: condemn unsporting behaviour.
- Maximise enjoyment: publicly encourage rule changes that will reinforce the principle of participating for fun and enjoyment.
- Keep up to date: make a personal commitment to keep informed of the sound principles of administering recommended football programs for junior players.
- Schedule practice activities and involvement in competition.
- Where I am responsible for underage or junior players, I will strive to ensure that all players gain equal playing time. I will avoid overplaying the talented players, aiming to maximise participation, learning and enjoyment for all players regardless of ability.
- Stress and monitor safety always.
- Display and foster respect for umpires, opponents, coaches, administrators, other officials, parents and spectators.

In the event that any Club member associated person hears or sees what they interpret to be a breach of the Codes of Conduct and wishes to lodge a complaint to the Club, they may do so by following the complaint process.



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Complaints

HVFC takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. The Club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

all complaints will be taken seriously;

- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of any complaint and have the opportunity to respond
- irrelevant matters will not be considered
- decisions will be unbiased and fair
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to the Member Protection Officer (MPO) of the Southern Football League. If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our Club will report the behaviour to the relevant authorities. To make a complaint to the Club, please contact a member of the Executive to request a record of complaint form.

Complaint Handling Process

- When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Secretary or any Executive person) will:
- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem
- ask what the complainant would like to happen
- explain the different options available to help resolve the problem
- take notes
- maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the Club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation)
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour)
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. Office for Recreation and Sport or Play By The Rules.)
- referring the complaint to the Southern Football League; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or antidiscrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to the Southern Football League and an inquiry is conducted, the club will:

- co-operate fully
- ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on the Southern Football League recommendations. At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an antidiscrimination commission or other external agency



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Disciplinary Measures

The Club will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached a policy or by-law or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed must:

- Be fair and reasonable.
- Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach.
- Be determined by the Constitution, Bylaws and the rules of the game.

Be agreed upon by all members of the Executive Committee Possible measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology
- counselling to address behaviour.
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club.
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

Members who are found to have breached a Club policy or by-law will be notified of the suspected breach by the Executive Committee and given an opportunity to provide evidence to prove otherwise. Where the Executive are not satisfied that the evidence given nullifies the suspected breach, they will collectively decide on an appropriate disciplinary measure.

Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions or disciplinary measures imposed by the Executive. This appeal is made to the Management Committee. The Management Committee will meet and vote to either uphold the decision of the Executive or decide on an alternative disciplinary measure. Where a decision cannot be unanimously agreed upon, it will be referred to the Southern Football League. Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/Club. Where the breach of policy results in reporting to the police or relevant authorities, no appeal will be allowed.

Reviewed October 2023

Next Review October 2025