



Club Policy

Fair Play Committee

Adopted: October 19, 2003

Purpose

The Fair Play Committee (FPC) is the organization through which the Club can evaluate and correct actions of coaches, players, parents and volunteers that appear to be inconsistent with the Club's Code of Conduct, the policies, rules, and expectations of the Club and the various leagues in which the Club participates, and those of the Alabama Soccer Association.

Structure

The Fair Play Committee shall be comprised of 5 members, including:

- The President
- The Vice President
- The Referee Director
- Two members of the Board of Commissioners

The commissioner members of the FPC will be elected by the Board of Directors to serve one-year terms running from August 1-July 31 of each year. The committee will elect a chairman from within its membership. (The President of the Club is not eligible for this position.)

Scope

Match Related Incidents

The FPC will review all ejection/expulsion incidents that may be noted on an official referee match report, including red cards or other dismissals received by Club players, coaches, managers, or trainers during league or tournament play and any incidents regarding the dismissal of spectators from the spectator areas. Any actions taken by the FPC for such violations may be in addition to the actions that may be taken by the league or state association.

Other Incidents

The FPC will review any other incidents concerning a Club player, manager, coach, trainer, or spectator as may be reported.



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Process

Incidents must be reported to the FPC in a traceable manner. They may be reported in writing or via e-mail to fairplay@americansoccer.org. Incident reports must include detailed, pertinent information regarding the nature of the incident (time, date, place etc.) and must include accurate contact information for the person reporting the incident. An example incident notification form will be made available to the membership via the Club web site.

All notifications will be forwarded to the FPC Chair, who will examine the particulars of the incident and inform the members of the committee of the notification and the timeframe within which the committee must address the incident. (For example, incidents that may require suspension for one or more matches must be addressed in time for the suspensions to be made effective if necessary.) The committee shall meet and consider the incident within the specified timeframe, taking what actions it may deem necessary based on information available.

Committee members who may be involved in the incident or have a personal interest in the incident or its circumstances are expected to recuse themselves from voting on any proposed FPC action, but may participate in fact-finding or discussions. The FPC may elect one of these courses of action:

- Defer consideration of the incident for a period of time,
- Investigate the incident before further consideration,
- Levy a penalty based on the guidelines below, or
- Remit the notification to the originator (with or without comment).

The FPC Chair will document actions taken in writing, and submit a notice of the action to both the originator and the subject of the notification. The FPC Chair will report any actions taken to the ASC Board on a monthly basis.

Zero Tolerance Policy

The Fair Play Committee will have zero tolerance for the following behaviors:

- Physical abuse of a player, coach, trainer, referee, match official, or club volunteer
- Possession of alcohol or illegal drugs at Club-managed facilities or Club-sanctioned training sessions and matches (including friendly matches, league play, or tournaments, regardless of location).



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Guidelines and Penalties

Disciplinary Action for Zero Tolerance Violations

Any provable violation of Zero Tolerance behaviors will result in the immediate suspension of the individual for a minimum of one year from the date of suspension. The suspended individual may request reinstatement by directing a formal written request for reinstatement to the FPC Chair after the suspension has been served in full. Persons suspended are not eligible for reimbursement of fees or payments.

Disciplinary Action for Repeated Verbal Abuse or Harassment

The FPC will apply a “three strikes and out” rule when considering reports of verbal abuse or harassment of players, coaches, trainers, referees, match officials, or club volunteers. If an individual is sanctioned three times in one year for verbal abuse or harassment, the FPC will treat the third violation as a Zero Tolerance violation.

Disciplinary Action for Other Violations & Complaints

The FPC will address each matter individually, and take the action that, in its sole discretion, represents the best interests of the American Soccer Club and its membership. The FPC, at its discretion, may seek the advice and counsel of the ASC Board before taking any action.

Appeal Process

An individual who is sanctioned by the FPC may appeal the sanction within 5 days of the date of being notified of the action taken. During the appeal process, the sanctions shall be enforced. Appeals must be made, in writing, to the American Soccer Club’s president, who upon receipt of the appeal shall schedule an appeal hearing by the Board of Directors. The individual requesting the appeal must appear before the Board at the hearing. After the hearing has been held, the Board will vote on whether to modify, reduce, or eliminate the sanction, or whether the sanction will stand as set forth by the FPC.