



Lakeside Volleyball Club

Discipline and Complaints Policy

2026/27 Season

Effective Date: September 1, 2026
Approved By: Lakeside Volleyball Club Executives
Review Date: Annually

1. Purpose

Lakeside Volleyball Club (the “Club”) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive and positive environment in which athletes can learn, compete and develop.

The purpose of this Discipline and Complaints Policy is to establish a fair, consistent and transparent process for:

- Addressing concerns regarding conduct or behaviour;
- Receiving and responding to complaints;
- Resolving appropriate concerns at the Club level;
- Applying appropriate disciplinary measures when Club expectations are not met;
- Protecting athletes, coaches, parents/guardians, officials, volunteers and Club personnel;
- Ensuring that serious matters are directed to the appropriate governing or external authority; and
- Maintaining compliance with the policies and requirements of the Ontario Volleyball Association (OVA).

This policy applies to all Lakeside athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, team staff, administrators, volunteers and other individuals participating in Club activities.

The Club's processes are intended to complement, and not replace, the policies and procedures of the OVA or other applicable governing bodies.

2. Commitment to Safe Sport

Lakeside Volleyball Club is committed to maintaining an environment free from abuse, harassment, discrimination, bullying, intimidation, retaliation and other prohibited behaviour.

The OVA states that safe sport is the responsibility of all members of the volleyball community and maintains a zero-tolerance position toward abuse, harassment and discrimination.

All individuals participating in Lakeside programs are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect;
- Follow applicable Club and OVA policies;

- Follow reasonable directions from coaches, officials and Club administrators;
 - Conduct themselves appropriately at practices, competitions, travel events and Club functions;
 - Respect facilities, equipment and property;
 - Refrain from abusive, threatening, discriminatory or harassing behaviour; and
 - Report serious concerns when they become aware of them.
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3. Relationship With OVA Policies

Lakeside Volleyball Club is an affiliated member of the Ontario Volleyball Association.

Where an incident or complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the OVA, the applicable OVA policy will take precedence over this policy.

The Club will not attempt to independently adjudicate matters where the OVA, another governing body, law-enforcement agency, child-protection authority or other appropriate authority has jurisdiction or where referral is otherwise required.

The OVA currently provides an independent third-party complaint process through Sport Dispute Management Inc. (SDM). Complaints submitted directly to the OVA are forwarded to SDM and processed under the OVA Discipline & Complaints Policy.

4. Types of Concerns

For the purposes of this policy, concerns generally fall into one of three categories.

4.1 General Concern

A general concern is an issue that may be appropriately addressed through communication, clarification, coaching or informal resolution.

Examples may include:

- Communication misunderstandings;
- Scheduling concerns;
- Minor team-management issues;
- Questions regarding coaching decisions;
- Concerns about playing opportunities;

- Minor breaches of team expectations; or
- Other issues that do not involve serious misconduct.

Where appropriate, the Club encourages individuals to attempt to resolve these matters respectfully at the lowest appropriate level.

4.2 Club Complaint

A Club complaint is a formal concern alleging that an individual has violated a Club policy, Code of Conduct, team expectation or other applicable rule.

Examples may include:

- Repeated inappropriate behaviour;
 - Disrespectful conduct;
 - Repeated failure to follow Club expectations;
 - Parent/guardian interference with coaching;
 - Inappropriate communication;
 - Unsportsmanlike behaviour;
 - Repeated disruption of team activities;
 - Property damage;
 - Breaches of Club communication policies; or
 - Other conduct that may warrant disciplinary action.
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4.3 Serious or Protected Matter

Certain concerns should not be handled solely through the Club's internal complaint process.

These may include allegations or concerns involving:

- Abuse;
- Sexual abuse or sexual misconduct;
- Physical abuse;
- Psychological or emotional abuse;
- Harassment;
- Discrimination;
- Sexual harassment;
- Grooming;
- Boundary violations;

- Retaliation;
- Threats of violence;
- Conduct involving a person in authority and a minor athlete;
- Suspected child abuse;
- Criminal conduct;
- Serious safeguarding concerns; or
- Other conduct falling under an OVA Safe Sport or discipline policy.

These matters may require immediate referral to the OVA, SDM, police, child protection services or another appropriate authority.

5. Immediate Safety Takes Priority

If an individual reasonably believes that someone is in immediate danger or that a criminal offence or child-protection matter may have occurred, the priority is the safety of the individual involved.

Depending upon the circumstances, individuals should contact:

- **911** in an emergency;
- Local police;
- The appropriate child-protection authority where there is a concern involving a child;
- The OVA Safe Sport process; and/or
- Another appropriate authority.

The Club's internal complaint process must not delay or interfere with a required report to police, child protection services or another authority.

6. Reporting to the OVA

Individuals are not required to resolve an OVA-related Safe Sport matter through Lakeside Volleyball Club before contacting the OVA.

An individual may report a complaint directly to the OVA or its independent Discipline Chair.

The OVA identifies Sport Dispute Management Inc. as the independent third-party Discipline Chair responsible for administering complaints.

Individuals who believe a matter may fall within OVA jurisdiction may contact:

Ontario Volleyball Association – Safe Sport

Email: safesport@ontariovolleyball.org

The OVA also provides a secure and confidential SDM intake process for complaints.

7. Who May Make a Complaint

A complaint may be made by:

- An athlete;
- Parent or guardian;
- Coach;
- Team staff member;
- Club administrator;
- Volunteer;
- Official;
- Other Club participant; or
- Any other person who has a legitimate concern regarding conduct connected to Lakeside Volleyball Club activities.

Complaints involving minors may be made by the athlete themselves or by a parent/guardian or other appropriate person on their behalf.

8. How to Submit a Club Complaint

A Club-level complaint should normally be submitted in writing to Club Executives or designated Club Complaints/Safe Sport contact.

Where possible, the complaint should include:

- Name of the person making the complaint;
- Name of the person whose conduct is being reported;
- Date and approximate time of the incident;

- Location;
- Description of what occurred;
- Names of witnesses, if known;
- Supporting documentation or evidence, if available; and
- Any steps already taken to address the matter.

A complaint does not need to contain legal terminology or identify a specific Club policy.

Individuals are encouraged to report concerns as soon as reasonably possible to complaints@lakesidevb.com. All members of our Executive Team will receive the complaints directly and can be reviewed firsthand by each member.

9. Anonymous Complaints

The Club may accept anonymous complaints where sufficient information is provided to permit meaningful action.

However, anonymity may limit the Club's ability to investigate, obtain additional information or provide a fair opportunity for the person accused to respond.

Where a matter involves a serious Safe Sport concern, the Club may refer the information to the OVA or another appropriate authority regardless of whether the reporting individual wishes to remain anonymous.

10. Confidentiality

The Club will make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality throughout the complaint process.

Information will be shared only with individuals who reasonably require the information to:

- Assess the complaint;
- Investigate the matter;
- Protect individuals;
- Implement interim measures;
- Make or review a disciplinary decision;
- Comply with Club or OVA requirements;
- Comply with legal obligations; or

- Otherwise appropriately administer the complaint.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Individuals involved in a complaint are expected not to discuss confidential information unnecessarily with other athletes, parents, coaches or members of the community.

11. Protection From Retaliation

Lakeside Volleyball Club does not tolerate retaliation against an individual who:

- Makes a complaint in good faith;
- Reports a concern;
- Participates in an investigation;
- Provides information or evidence;
- Acts as a witness; or
- Otherwise assists with the resolution of a complaint.

Retaliation may itself constitute a disciplinary violation.

This does not prevent the Club from taking appropriate action where a complaint is knowingly false, malicious or made in bad faith.

12. Initial Review of a Complaint

Upon receiving a complaint, the Club will determine:

1. Whether the matter falls within Club jurisdiction;
2. Whether immediate safety measures are required;
3. Whether the matter should be referred to the OVA or another authority;
4. Whether the matter can reasonably be resolved informally;
5. Whether a formal Club investigation is appropriate; and
6. Whether interim measures are necessary while the matter is being addressed.

The Club may consult with the OVA or other appropriate advisors when determining how a complaint should be handled.

13. Interim Measures

Where appropriate, the Club may implement temporary measures while a complaint is being reviewed.

Interim measures are not intended to represent a finding of wrongdoing.

Depending upon the circumstances, interim measures may include:

- Adjusting practice or competition arrangements;
- Changing communication arrangements;
- Separating individuals;
- Restricting contact between individuals;
- Temporarily removing an individual from a Club activity;
- Changing team responsibilities;
- Requiring that communications occur through a designated Club representative; or
- Other reasonable measures necessary to protect participants or maintain a safe environment.

Interim measures may be implemented before a final decision is made where the Club believes they are reasonably necessary.

14. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate and where the matter does not involve serious misconduct, the Club may attempt to resolve a concern informally.

Possible approaches include:

- Clarification of expectations;
- Facilitated discussion;
- Coaching or education;
- Mediation;
- Verbal warning;
- Written expectations;
- Team meeting;
- Parent/coach meeting; or
- Other reasonable corrective measures.

Informal resolution will not be used where doing so would be inappropriate because of the seriousness or nature of the allegation.

In particular, serious Safe Sport, abuse, harassment, discrimination or similar matters should not be forced into an informal resolution process.

15. Formal Investigation

Where a formal investigation is appropriate, the Club may:

- Review relevant Club policies;
- Interview the complainant;
- Provide the respondent with an opportunity to respond;
- Interview relevant witnesses;
- Review relevant documents or communications;
- Review photographs, video or other evidence;
- Review team or Club records; and
- Take other reasonable steps necessary to understand the circumstances.

The Club will seek to conduct investigations in a fair, impartial and timely manner.

The standard of review used by the Club will be appropriate to the circumstances and consistent with applicable Club and governing-body requirements.

16. Right to Respond

An individual who is the subject of a Club disciplinary complaint will generally be informed of the substance of the concern and given a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final disciplinary decision is made.

This may be modified where:

- Immediate safety concerns exist;
- Disclosure could compromise an investigation;
- The matter has been referred to another authority;
- A governing-body process applies; or
- Disclosure is otherwise inappropriate or prohibited.

17. Disciplinary Measures

Where the Club determines that an individual has breached a Club policy, Code of Conduct or reasonable Club expectation, one or more of the following measures may be applied:

Level 1 – Education or Corrective Action

- Verbal discussion;
- Clarification of expectations;
- Coaching or education;
- Team meeting;
- Informal warning;
- Written expectations; or
- Other corrective action.

Level 2 – Formal Warning

- Written warning;
- Formal meeting with the athlete and/or parent/guardian;
- Behavioural expectations or improvement plan;
- Restrictions on participation; or
- Other appropriate conditions.

Level 3 – Suspension or Restriction

- Temporary suspension from practices;
- Suspension from competitions;
- Restriction from team activities;
- Removal of a parent/guardian from team activities;
- Restriction on communication with coaches or athletes;
- Loss of Club privileges; or
- Other appropriate restrictions.

Level 4 – Removal From Team or Club

For serious or repeated violations, the Club may:

- Remove an athlete from a team;
- Remove a coach or team staff member;
- Remove a volunteer;

- Terminate a Club appointment;
- Terminate Club membership; or
- Take other appropriate action permitted by Club and governing-body rules.

Disciplinary action will be proportionate to the nature and severity of the conduct.

18. Factors Considered When Determining Discipline

When determining an appropriate disciplinary response, the Club may consider:

- The seriousness of the conduct;
- Whether the conduct was intentional;
- Whether anyone was harmed or placed at risk;
- The individual's previous conduct;
- Whether the individual acknowledged responsibility;
- Whether the individual cooperated with the process;
- Whether the conduct was repeated;
- The age and circumstances of the individual;
- Whether the individual holds a position of authority;
- The impact on the team or Club;
- Any mitigating circumstances; and
- Any other relevant considerations.

The Club is not required to apply progressive discipline where the nature of the conduct warrants a more serious response.

19. Parent and Spectator Conduct

Parents, guardians and spectators are representatives of the Lakeside Volleyball Club community and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately.

The Club may restrict or remove a parent, guardian or spectator from practices, competitions, tournaments or other Club activities where their behaviour:

- Interferes with coaching;
- Harasses or intimidates athletes, coaches, officials or other parents;

- Is abusive or threatening;
- Is discriminatory;
- Creates an unsafe or disruptive environment;
- Damages property;
- Violates venue rules; or
- Otherwise violates Club or OVA expectations.

A restriction on a parent or guardian's attendance does not necessarily affect the athlete's participation in the program.

20. Athlete Discipline

Athletes are expected to understand and comply with the Club's Athlete Code of Conduct, team rules and reasonable instructions from coaches and Club personnel.

Athlete discipline will take into consideration the athlete's age, maturity, circumstances and the nature of the conduct.

For younger athletes in particular, the Club will generally emphasize education, accountability and behaviour correction rather than punitive measures.

Serious misconduct may warrant immediate suspension or removal regardless of the athlete's age.

21. Coach and Team Staff Discipline

Coaches and team staff occupy positions of trust and authority and are expected to comply with all applicable OVA, Club and Person in Authority requirements.

Concerns involving coaches or team staff will be treated seriously.

Where a concern involves abuse, harassment, discrimination, boundary violations, maltreatment or other conduct governed by OVA Safe Sport policies, the matter may be referred directly to the OVA/SDM process.

The Club may implement interim measures while such a matter is being reviewed.

22. Complaints Regarding Coaching Decisions

Parents and athletes may have legitimate disagreements with coaching decisions.

Examples include concerns regarding:

- Playing time;
- Position assignments;
- Lineups;
- Team selection;
- Training methods;
- Tournament decisions;
- Player development;
- Communication; or
- Other volleyball-related decisions.

These matters do not automatically constitute disciplinary complaints.

Where appropriate, concerns should first be raised respectfully with the coach through the Club's established communication process.

The Club will generally not overturn legitimate coaching decisions simply because an athlete or parent disagrees with the decision.

However, concerns involving discriminatory, abusive, retaliatory, unsafe or otherwise inappropriate conduct will be treated differently and may be subject to formal review.

23. Complaints Regarding Team Selection

Team selection and roster decisions are made based upon the Club's established selection process and the assessment of athletes by the designated selection staff.

A parent or athlete may request clarification regarding the selection process.

However, disagreement with a selection decision does not, by itself, constitute grounds for a disciplinary complaint or guarantee a change in the selection decision.

Complaints alleging improper conduct, discrimination, retaliation, conflicts of interest or violations of applicable Club or OVA policies will be reviewed separately.

24. Communication During a Complaint

Individuals involved in a complaint are expected to communicate respectfully.

While a complaint is being reviewed, the Club may establish specific communication protocols.

These may include:

- Communicating only with a designated Club representative;
- Requiring written communication;
- Restricting direct communication between parties;
- Requiring a parent/guardian to attend meetings involving a minor athlete; or
- Establishing appropriate communication boundaries.

Public discussion of an active complaint on social media, team chat groups or other public platforms may itself constitute a breach of Club expectations where it is harassing, threatening, defamatory, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate.

25. Social Media and Electronic Communication

The Club's expectations regarding respectful conduct apply to:

- Email;
- Text messages;
- Team messaging platforms;
- Social media;
- Direct messages;
- Group chats;
- Online forums; and
- Other electronic communication.

Conduct occurring outside a Club facility may still fall within this policy when it:

- Involves Club participants;
 - Relates to a Club activity;
 - Impacts the team environment;
 - Targets a Club participant; or
 - Has a material impact on the safety or operation of the Club.
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26. Conflicts of Interest

Any person involved in reviewing or deciding a complaint should disclose any actual or reasonably perceived conflict of interest.

A person may be removed from the complaint process where their involvement could reasonably compromise the fairness or perceived impartiality of the process.

Where appropriate, the Club may appoint an independent person to assist with or conduct the review.

27. Timelines

The Club will make reasonable efforts to address complaints in a timely manner.

The time required will depend upon:

- The seriousness of the matter;
- The number of people involved;
- Availability of witnesses;
- Complexity of the evidence;
- Whether another organization is involved; and
- Any other circumstances affecting the process.

The Club will not sacrifice fairness or participant safety simply to meet an arbitrary deadline.

28. Outcome of a Complaint

Once a Club-level complaint has been reviewed, the Club may:

- Determine that no breach occurred;
- Determine that the matter is better addressed informally;
- Issue a warning;
- Apply disciplinary measures;
- Establish behavioural expectations;
- Implement restrictions;
- Refer the matter to the OVA or another authority;
- Take other appropriate corrective action; or
- Determine that no further action is required.

Where appropriate, the complainant will be informed that the matter has been addressed.

Due to privacy and confidentiality obligations, the Club may not disclose the specific disciplinary action taken against another individual.

29. Appeals

Where a Club-level disciplinary decision results in a significant sanction, the affected individual may submit a written request for reconsideration to Club Executives.

The request should identify:

- The decision being challenged;
- The reasons for reconsideration; and
- Any relevant new information.

A request for reconsideration should normally be submitted within **10 calendar days** of receiving the decision.

An appeal or reconsideration request does not automatically suspend a disciplinary measure.

Club Executives may:

- Confirm the original decision;
- Modify the decision;
- Remove the decision;
- Require further review; or
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external body.

Where an OVA disciplinary or Safe Sport process applies, the applicable OVA appeal or review process takes precedence.

30. No Retaliatory or Frivolous Use of the Complaint Process

The complaint process must not be used to:

- Intimidate another individual;
- Attempt to influence legitimate coaching decisions;
- Harass Club personnel;
- Retaliate against another person;
- Gain an unfair competitive advantage;
- Circumvent the normal Club communication process; or
- Make knowingly false allegations.

A complaint made in good faith will not be considered improper merely because it is ultimately determined that no breach occurred.

Knowingly false, malicious or deliberately misleading complaints may result in disciplinary action.

31. Record Keeping

The Club will maintain appropriate records of formal complaints and disciplinary matters.

Records may include:

- The original complaint;
- Relevant correspondence;
- Interview notes;

- Supporting evidence;
- Decisions;
- Disciplinary measures;
- Appeals or reconsideration requests; and
- Other relevant documentation.

Records will be stored securely and accessed only by individuals with a legitimate reason to access them.

The Club will retain records in accordance with applicable legal, insurance, OVA and Club requirements.

32. Privacy

Personal information collected during a complaint or disciplinary process will be handled in a manner consistent with applicable privacy obligations.

Information will only be collected, used and disclosed for legitimate purposes associated with:

- Participant safety;
- Complaint management;
- Discipline;
- Club administration;
- OVA requirements;
- Legal obligations; or
- Other legitimate purposes permitted by applicable law.

33. Cooperation With External Investigations

Lakeside Volleyball Club will cooperate appropriately with investigations conducted by:

- Ontario Volleyball Association;
- Sport Dispute Management Inc.;
- Police;
- Child protection authorities;

- Courts;
- Insurance providers; or
- Other authorized governing or regulatory bodies.

The Club may pause or modify its own investigation where an external investigation is underway.

The Club will not interfere with an external investigation.

34. Education and Prevention

Lakeside Volleyball Club recognizes that effective discipline is not solely punitive.

The Club will seek to prevent misconduct by:

- Clearly communicating expectations;
- Providing access to applicable Codes of Conduct;
- Educating athletes and parents regarding appropriate behaviour;
- Ensuring coaches understand their responsibilities;
- Promoting respectful communication;
- Encouraging early reporting of concerns; and
- Reviewing Club policies regularly.

35. Relationship With the Club Codes of Conduct

This policy should be read together with the Lakeside Volleyball Club:

- Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct;
- Athlete Code of Conduct;
- Coach Code of Conduct;
- Club Handbook;
- Social Media and Communication Guidelines;
- Safe Sport requirements; and
- Other applicable Club policies.

A breach of any of these documents may result in action under this Discipline and Complaints Policy.

36. Policy Authority

The Lakeside Volleyball Club Executive is responsible for administering this policy.

Club Executives may establish procedures necessary to implement this policy provided they remain consistent with:

- This policy;
- Club bylaws;
- Applicable law;
- OVA policies;
- Volleyball Canada requirements; and
- Other applicable governing-body requirements.

Where a conflict exists between this policy and a mandatory OVA requirement, the applicable OVA requirement will take precedence.

37. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and may be amended when necessary to reflect:

- Changes to OVA policies;
- Changes to Volleyball Canada requirements;
- Changes to legislation;
- Changes to Club operations;
- Changes to Safe Sport requirements; or
- Best practices in sport governance.

The Club will make reasonable efforts to ensure that members have access to the current version of the policy.

38. Acknowledgement

By registering with Lakeside Volleyball Club, the athlete and parent/guardian acknowledge that they have had the opportunity to review this Discipline and Complaints Policy and agree to comply with the standards, procedures and expectations contained within it.

The athlete and parent/guardian further acknowledge that serious complaints may be referred to the Ontario Volleyball Association, Sport Dispute Management Inc., police, child protection authorities or another appropriate organization where required or appropriate.

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