



DONAGHADEE LADIES HOCKEY CLUB

COMPLAINTS POLICY



DLHC COMPLAINTS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT AND AIMS

DLHC is committed to delivering a quality service at all times. However we know that things can go wrong. If you are unhappy about any aspect of our service we would like to hear from you, we have a procedure that you can use. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future as well as a chance to put things right for the person/people that have made the complaint.

DLHC is committed to support and deal with all complaints fairly, effectively and satisfactorily for any complainants.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- To make sure that everyone at DLHC knows what to do if a complaint is received or needs to be made.
- To make sure all our complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information which helps us improve what we do.



WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.

Complaints can fall under two categories:

A. Complaints about the actions or behaviour of DLHC members or volunteers acting in a role representing DLHC.

B. Complaints received by DLHC about the action or behaviour of a third party, in particular:

- An opposing team during a game
- A specific player or players
- An umpire/umpires
- Spectators
- A coach/coach who is not acting on behalf of DLHC

Complaints about umpiring decisions made during a game cannot be changed and therefore will not be accepted. As per FIH Rules of Hockey, all umpires must umpire fairly and with a good knowledge of the rules and the final result of a game cannot be altered.

Issues occurring during a game should be brought to the team Captain at that time so she may discuss with the Umpire if necessary.



HOW IS A COMPLAINT MADE?

Complaints should be made to the Honorary Secretary of DLHC. Complaints will be considered by a Complaints Committee convened by DLHC Management committee. (Hon.Sec. plus two others)

Written complaints may be sent by email to: DLHC Honorary Secretary at dlhc@hotmail.co.uk

Verbal complaints may be made by phone or in person to either the Honorary Secretary or any member of the Management Committee who should in turn bring it to the Honorary Secretary.

RECEIVING COMPLAINTS

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded. The person who receives a complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainants name, address and telephone number
- Note the relationship of the complainant to DLHC eg member, sponsor, parent.
- Tell the complainant that DLHC has a complaints procedure and how to access it
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Ask the complainant to send a written account by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainants' own words.

On receiving the complaint, the Honorary Secretary records it in the complaint log and asks the Complaints Committee to investigate and take appropriate action.

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

DLHC adhere to the guidelines of the Ulster Hockey Complaints policy which encourages clubs to address any complaints directly with the club/individual concerned as the issue may be more appropriately and swiftly resolved at the time and by the individuals who are responsible for/witnessed/been part of the issue being complained about.



STAGE 1

If the complaint relates to a specific person they should be informed and given an opportunity to respond. Complaints should be acknowledged by the Complaints committee within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply (Ideally within 4 weeks). A copy of this complaints procedure should also be attached.

If a definitive reply is not possible after 4 weeks then a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusion from the investigation and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

STAGE 2

If the complainant or the full Management Committee consider that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by the full Management committee. (Procedure as above in stage 1).

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Management Committee decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance e.g. Referral to Ulster Hockey. Please note a referral to Ulster hockey must be made by the club Secretary and will not be accepted through anyone else.

For guidelines see Ulster Hockey Complaints Policy available on the UH website.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

VARIATION OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Management Committee may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Secretary should not also have the Secretary leading the investigation.

Date of Review: February 2026



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