

COMPLAINTS POLICY

VALUES

Everyone involved in table tennis participates with good intentions and we are all expected to do our best to treat each other with respect and comply with our policies and rules. Despite this, problems sometimes arise. Children and young people in particular must be cared for, treated with respect and their welfare placed at the centre of everything we do in our sport.

Table Tennis NZ is committed to supporting everyone, including participants, coaches, volunteers, whānau and supporters, to participate in an environment that is respectful, safe, and fair.

Member protection policies are important to uphold the culture of an organisation, to ensure that we treat people with respect, dignity and free of harm and discrimination.

At Table Tennis NZ we will **collaborate** as we believe we are stronger together. We commit to listen with **respect** as we know all views are important. If you wish to make a complaint, we will act with **integrity** and do our best to resolve issues. We want to learn, adapt and improve to support and serve our stakeholders.

Table Tennis NZ acknowledges it is important to everyone involved to respond quickly, fairly and thoughtfully to address issues. People are entitled to raise concerns or complaints and to have those addressed promptly and fairly. No one should be punished or victimised for raising a concern or a complaint in good faith. This policy is centred on equity, dignity, and respect.

The following principles should be kept in mind when applying this policy:

- Respect for the culture(s) of the people involved including culturally appropriate processes being enabled to resolve complaints and restore relationships.
- Addressing problems informally and face to face, wherever possible.
- Treating others fairly, equally and in a way that keeps their mana intact.
- Maintaining relationships and keeping each other safe

PURPOSE

This policy sets out the steps for raising and dealing with concerns and complaints. It aims to:

- support people to resolve minor issues on their own
- give clear guidance for making, dealing with and resolving complaints
- make sure the approach taken to dealing with complaints is fair, consistent including enabling cultural appropriate responses and processes.

APPLICATION

Complaints can be made by or about anyone involved in table tennis. This includes: volunteers, participants, supporters, club members, employees, service providers, and families/ whānau of participants.

What can complaints be about?

Complaints may be made about things such as actions or decisions of organisation members or officials, processes not being managed well (or at all), low level disputes or disagreements between members, unprofessional or upsetting behaviour, or delays or failure to communicate about matters affecting a person.

Complaints may involve, but not limited to :

- organisation management issues
- conflicts of interest (including favouritism)
- off-field unsporting behaviour
- disrespectful behaviour
- low-level bullying
- low-level sexual harassment
- discrimination
- abuse of power
- health and safety risks
- offensive/insulting language or behaviour

INFORMAL RESOLUTION FIRST

People are always encouraged to raise concerns directly with the person who has behaved in a way causing concern, unless there are safety reasons or the issue is too serious to try to resolve it this way. If you do not feel comfortable raising the complaint yourself, a support person can raise it with the person on your behalf.

Both parties involved should have a chance to be heard respectfully, and feel safe to be able to say what they want to say, keeping in mind the need to find ways to resolve issues and be able to work with one another in future.

If self-managed informal resolution isn't successful or appropriate, it should be raised with the District Association or Table Tennis NZ which, in consultation with the people involved, will put in place an appropriate process to try to resolve it. This may include holding a facilitated meeting in a place, and following a process, that meets the needs of the people involved.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Formal complaints should ideally be made in writing, as soon as possible after the event(s). Where this is not possible, the complainant should be helped by the person receiving the verbal complaint to put it in writing.

A formal complaint is any written complaint regarding dissatisfaction with a service, mistreatment, discrimination, assault (physical/verbal), intimidation and bullying, inappropriate conduct, that is:

- deemed serious
- something that has not been resolved through initial discussion with the appropriate person.

There is a Table Tennis NZ complaints form on the Table Tennis NZ website.

Who do I make the complaint to?

If the complaint is about a Table Tennis organisation or about a member of a Table Tennis organisation, the complaint can be raised with the relevant Association or Club [e.g. Chairman or President]. If the complaint is not able to be resolved, it can be escalated to Table Tennis NZ .

If the complaint is about a Table Tennis NZ issue or about a member/employee/contractor/volunteer of Table Tennis NZ, the complaint can be raised with the CEO.

If the committee or official that the complaint would usually be made to is involved in the issue or has a conflict of interest, the complaint should be made or passed to another suitable person in authority. For Table Tennis NZ that would be the Board Chairperson.

How will I be treated?

A person making a formal complaint can expect to be treated in line with the following principles:

- Fairness: Every person dealing with a complaint will remain neutral and listen to both sides of the story. Any action arising from a complaint will be reasonable in proportion to the seriousness of the complaint.
- Respect: Every person involved in a complaint will be treated and is expected to act towards others with respect, dignity and in a culturally appropriate way. Complaints will be raised and handled sensitively, with a goal to preserve relationships by acknowledging each other's role and contribution to the sport.
- Communication: Every person involved in a complaint will be regularly kept up to date on progress and the outcome.
- Confidentiality: Information relating to a complaint will not be shared with any other person without consent, unless fair process or the law require the information to be shared with a person or an authority. This will be discussed with the person providing the information.
- Restoration: The goals of the complaints process are to resolve the particular complaint, restore people's mana and maintain positive relationships within the organisation and across the sporting and wider community.
- Acknowledgement: Every person involved in a complaint will be asked to recognise the importance of acknowledging any fault or mistakes, the hurt this has done and if necessary, give a genuine apology.
- Support: Both the person making the complaint and person complained about should have access to support throughout a complaint process. Everyone involved in a process may be accompanied by chosen family/whānau and/or other support people.

[policy approved 31.3.22]