



Knox Little Athletics Centre

Process Document

Knox LAC Code of Conduct & Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process

Document Approval:

Knox LAC Executive

Document Owner:

Knox LAC President.

Controlled Document

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define and document a Code of Conduct and a Complaint and Dispute Resolution process for Knox Little Athletics Centre (Knox LAC). The process is based on the Little Athletics Victoria (LAVic) Code of Conduct Policy and observed by all associated with the Knox Little Athletics Centre.

The intent of this policy is not to take away from “good common sense” where a complaint or dispute cannot be reported verbally during or after a competition and can be expediently dealt with via constructive conversation or mediation. This policy is to be used if a complaint or dispute cannot be resolved via “good common sense” or the complainant(s) decide a more formal process is required to provide a resolution.

2. SCOPE

The document covers all requirements to meet the stated purpose of the document including

- What constitutes the Knox LAC Code of Conduct and its components
- What constitutes a complaint or dispute
- The Knox LAC Code of Conduct as the basis for any complaint or dispute
- Adherence to the Knox LAC Social Media Policy
- Lodging a complaint/dispute and acknowledgement of lodgement.
- Negotiation and mediation process
- Escalation process
- Finalisation of complaint/dispute
- Penalties

3. GOVERNANCE

The Knox LAC Executive will provide overall governance for this process. Governance activities include:

- Approval and release of this document and subsequent versions
- Ensure a co-ordinated and documented approach to all aspects of this process including ownership, accountability and responsibility of all components of the processes
- Provide the final decision in any complain/dispute including whether or not a complaint/dispute is escalated beyond Knox LAC.
- Provide a focal point for process discussions and communications.

4. STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders Name	Stakeholders Title/Position
Russell Speight	President, Knox LAC and Knox Park Board of Management representative
Stephen Egan	Secretary, Knox LAC
Michael Donato	Coaching Co-ordinator, Knox LAC
Nick Tahlambouris	Convenor, Knox LAC Jury Panel
Phil Matthews	Public Relations/Multimedia Co-ordinator

5. COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

For clarity and ease of implementation of this process the following descriptions define the difference between a complaint and a dispute.

5.1 Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with an entity or service being offered/supplied, or negative or unjustified behaviour. As applicable to Knox LAC a complaint is

- 5.1.1 Dissatisfaction with the Knox LAC complex and its surrounds and includes issues with dirty or unsafe facilities, lack of and/or inadequate amenities (including toilets), parking, lighting, PA/sound, canteen/food services, etc)
- 5.1.2 Dissatisfaction with Centre facilities/equipment and resources (including event timing and result recording, training, activities and attitude of coaches, officials, office bearers, parents or athletes.
- 5.1.3 Dissatisfaction with the circumstances of how an event or competition is being conducted (either at Knox Park or at another location involving Knox LAC athletes).
- 5.1.4 Verbal or other indicative forms of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, unjustified and/or threatening behaviour behaviour including online as outlined in the Knox LAC Social Media Policy
- 5.1.5 Dissatisfaction with an entity or service being offered or unjustified behaviour not covered in Pts. 5.1.1 – 5.1.4

5.2 Dispute

A dispute is an expression of disagreement with a decision, ruling or stated outcome. As applicable to Knox LAC a dispute is

- 5.2.1 Dissatisfaction with a decision during competition (including measuring or timing of an event, published results of an event or an official or referee ruling on the conduct of an event)
- 5.2.2 Dissatisfaction with a decision regarding a team selection or the methodology of a team selection
- 5.2.3 Dissatisfaction with a decision, ruling or stated outcome not covered in Pts 5.2.1 and 5.2.2

In practical terms a complaint can be a less formal action compared to a dispute and involves a difference of opinion which can be resolved through less formal mediation or resolution (i.e. acknowledgement and resolution of a complaint as part of maintenance of the complex).

An informal (or verbal) complaint can be resolved by Competition Director or Referee(s) during Knox LAC competition.

A dispute can be a more formal action and requires written documented evidence to substantiate the existence of the dispute.

A complaint can become a dispute if it cannot be resolved via mediation or is of a nature that requires a formal resolution process and/or escalation.

The Knox LAC Executive has the right to act as a complainant and lodge a complaint or dispute with an individual, entity or organisation based on the above descriptions including unjustified and threatening behaviour.

6. CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

6.1 Description of the Code of Conduct

The Knox LAC has implemented a Code of Conduct policy and this policy is the basis for any and all complaints or disputes. Any complaints and disputes are to be reported and addressed with respect to the use and application of the Knox LAC Code of Conduct only.

The Knox LAC Code of Conduct comprises the following elements.

- 6.1.1 A Code of Conduct which is aligned with Little Athletics Victoria Code of Conduct and covers required behaviour from administrators, officials, parents, spectators, coaches and athletes.

The Knox LAC Code of Conduct is available on page 14 of the Knox LAC 2010/11 Handbook and is also available on the Knox LAC website via the following link;

www.klac23.org.au/behaviour.htm

- 6.1.2 The Victorian Governments' Code of Conduct for Community Sport which outlines behaviours which are expected to be followed by every person involved in community sport, as well as identifying the behaviours which must not be tolerated. Please go to the following link for further details

<http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/sport/inclusive-sport/code-of-conduct>

<http://www.sport.vic.gov.au/web9/dvcsrv.nsf/headingpagesdisplay/active+communitiesvictorian+code+of+conduct+for+community+sport>

- 6.1.3 Parents Responsibilities which covers Duty Requirements, and supervision of family members attending and/or competing. A copy of Parents Responsibilities is published on Pg. 9 of the Knox LAC 2010/11 Handbook.
- 6.1.4 Centre Rules which covers rules of competition for all events including generic and Club rules for a competition as well as rules for the running of actual events. A copy of Centre Rules is published on page 19 of the Knox LAC 2010/11 Handbook.
- 6.1.5 A subset of the Code of Conduct is the Knox LAC Social Media Policy covering online activity

6.2 Acceptance and agreement of the Code of Conduct

At the time of athlete registration (including Registration Days), all registering athletes and an associated parent/carer, as part of the registration process, are to sign acknowledging their knowledge and understanding of the Code of Conduct and their acceptance to observe and abide by all aspects of the Code of Conduct Policy including behaviour, performance of duty and observance of Centre Rules. The Code along with the Knox LAC Social Media Policy will be made available to read on Registration Day and from the Club Team Manager on other days.

Failure to sign acceptance of the Code of Conduct will render the athlete(s) concerned ineligible to compete at any and all Knox LAC events, competitions and training.

A record of all acceptances of the Knox LAC Code of Conduct will be maintained on behalf of the Knox LAC Executive and will be utilised by Centre officials or the Knox LAC Executive as part of any complaint or dispute.

7. LODGEMENT OF A COMPLAINT OR DISPUTE

7.1 Verbal lodgement of a complaint or dispute

During normal Knox LAC weekly competitions a complaint or dispute (as defined in Section 5) can be lodged verbally with the relevant Club Team Mgr. Such complaints or disputes should be of an adhoc nature that can be resolved by “good common sense” such as a discussion, answering a question, explanation of relevant rules or processes, etc. If required, the Club Team Mgr can escalate the complaint or dispute to the Competition Director or the Centre Referee.

During EMR Region and LAVic State Championships, a verbal dispute can ONLY be made through the Centre Team Manager within a certain time period after the occurrence and with a payable fee (as per the relevant EMR and State processes).

During Knox LAC Special Events (Opens and Championship Days), a verbal dispute can ONLY be made to the Centre Team Manager or a member of the Knox LAC Special Events Sub-Committee, who will then consult the Competition Director or a Centre Referee.

The resolution of a complaint/dispute lodged verbally during the running of an athletic competition may precipitate to the lodgement of a formal dispute. In this case the process noted from Section 7.2 will be observed.

Similarly the lodgement of a verbal complaint or dispute does not imply that a formal lodgement is required or has to occur.

7.2 Formal lodgement of a complaint or dispute

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of a verbal complaint/dispute via a “good common sense” approach or believes the complaint/dispute is of a nature that requires it to be formally addressed by the Centre Executive an Incident Report Form is to be completed and sent to the Knox Executive within seven (7) calendar days of the complaint occurring.

The complaint/dispute should be addressed to:

The Knox LAC Executive
P.O. Box 4444
Knox City Centre
Wantirna South 3152.

The Incident Report form along with the evidence may also be emailed to secretary@klac23.org.au or handed to the Centre Secretary.

Details and corroborating evidence needs to be included with the lodgement. Copies of the Incident Report Form are available from Club Team Managers and from the Centre Secretary.

A lodged complaint/dispute will be included as an Item of Business at the next scheduled Knox LAC Executive Meeting and formally minuted. The Executive will advise the complainant of the complaint/dispute being minuted and any subsequent action, including resolution at the Executive Meeting, held over for further investigation and discussion, allocation to the Knox LAC Jury Panel or escalated to a relevant authority (e.g. Board of Management, Knox Council or LAVic, region or state group.) Details on the composition of the Knox LAC Jury Panel is covered in Sect. 8 of this document.

8. RESOLUTION OF A COMPLAINT OR DISPUTE

Once a complaint or dispute has been formally minuted at an Executive Meeting, the Exec may discuss it at that Executive Meeting and subsequent meetings to resolve the complaint. It may also consult with Subject Matter Experts in relation to discussing and resolving the complaint – this includes representatives from Centre Committees such as Competition, Finance, Public Relations, etc or other Centre, Region or State Association representatives who can provide expert advice.

If a complaint or dispute is resolved by the Executive it can determine if any further action or penalties are to be applied as part of the complaint resolution and the extent of the penalties. The decision and any further action or penalties are to be minuted and the complainant advised.

If a complaint or dispute lodged with the Knox LAC Executive has not be resolved and finalised at an Executive meeting, the Executive will refer the complaint or dispute to the Knox LAC Jury Panel to take responsibility for the resolution of the complaint/dispute. (see Sect 9 for composition of the Jury Panel)

Upon referral of a complaint or dispute by the Knox LAC Executive, the nominated Knox LAC Jury Panel will convene as agreed and the complaint/dispute minuted and discussed. During this meeting or any subsequent meetings the Jury Panel may vote to resolve the complaint/dispute with a majority vote required to pass the resolution. If required the Jury Panel may invite the complainant and other witnesses to discuss/negotiate the complaint/dispute.

Any complaint/dispute that is resolved by the Jury Panel will be notified to the Knox LAC Executive. The Jury Panel may recommend any further action or penalties that are to be imposed as part of the resolution. The Knox Executive shall have the final decision on the conclusion of the complaint as well as any penalties to be imposed and will advise the complainant of the resolution and any imposed penalties..

If the complaint/dispute cannot be resolved by the Knox LAC Jury Panel it will nominate to whom the complaint/dispute should be escalated to and advise the Knox LAC Executive. The complaint/dispute can be escalated to EMR Executive Committee for resolution. The Executive will determine if the nominated escalation is the correct action and if so escalate the complaint/dispute as nominated. If the nominated escalation resolves the complaint/dispute it will advise the Knox LAC Executive who will advise the complainant.

If not resolved at the EMR level, EMR may escalate it to the LAVic Grievance Panel (as per LAVic Regulation 16 – Complaint Handling)

9. KNOX LAC JURY PANEL

The Knox LAC Jury Panel is an independent sub-Committee of the Knox LAC Executive and the Panel Foreman will represent the Jury Panel and liaise with the Knox LAC Executive as and when required. The Knox LAC Jury Panel will comprise of at least five members with at least one representative from the Executive and a representative from the Competition Committee. The remaining Jury Panel members will be decided and selected by the Executive comprising members from Executive, associated Committees and individual clubs as it deems necessary and relevant.

The Jury Panel may be agreed on and not amended for a set period of time (eg 12 months. period or an athletics season) or selected/amended due to the nature of the complaint/dispute. If not amended for a set period the Jury Panel will convene for any and all complaints/disputes referred by the Executive during that set period. If selected/amended as determined by the Executive up to an additional 2 members can be added to the Jury Panel.

All discussions and deliberations within the Jury Panel and between panel members are in-confidence and all Jury Panel members will sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) between themselves and Knox LAC to that effect.

10. FINALISATION OF A COMPLAINT OR DISPUTE

The Knox Executive shall have the final decision on the conclusion of the complaint or dispute (including those referred to it by the Knox LAC Jury Panel and any escalation process) as well as any penalties to be imposed and will advise the complainant of the resolution and any imposed penalties..

The Executive will minute the finalisation at an Executive meeting and also note the finalisation in any associated documentation.

The Executive will inform the complainant in writing of the finalisation of the complaint or dispute including any further action or penalties associated with the finalisation.

If and as appropriate the Executive will advise the relevant club(s) of the complaint/dispute and the outcome/finalisation. The appropriateness of this advice will be determined by the Executive based on the impact the finalisation has on the clubs functionality or the impact on officials, parents and athletes associated with the club(s).

Any Centre or club rules, guidelines or processes impacted by the finalisation of a complaint/dispute will be amended/updated as determined and advised by the Knox LAC Executive.

11. PENALTIES

Depending on the finalisation of a complaint or dispute the Knox LAC Centre may impose penalties on the complainant. Penalties may be recommended by the Knox LAC Jury Panel but any imposed penalties are to be approved by the Knox LAC and must be in accordance with published Standing Rules and Regulations.

Penalties may be applicable to the complainant individually or maybe applicable to family members and athletes associated with the complainant as determined and approved by the Executive.

Penalties may involve a monetary fine to pay for accrued costs (such as outstanding fees, repairs, replacement of facilities or equipment, medical expenses, legal fees, etc).

Penalties may involve the suspension of the claimant (or including other family members) from competing at Knox LAC competitions for a set period of time or attendance at the Knox LAC complex for a set period of time. The set period of time will be determined by the Knox LAC Executive and take into account any mitigating circumstances or ongoing effects including impact on the claimant and family.

The set period of time may also include an indefinite ban from attending or competing at the Knox Park complex including all athletic competitions and events, training, club meetings and Centre/Club social activities.

12. APPEAL PROCESS

As per Little Athletics Victoria guidelines the complainant may appeal the resolution or determination of a complaint or dispute. Any appeal must be based on new evidence or details which were not provided/unavailable at the time of the initial complaint and this new evidence is to be provided at the time of an appeal.

Any appeal is to be made within seven (7) days of the complainant being advised of the conclusion to a complaint/dispute and is to be made in writing and addressed to:

The Knox LAC Executive
P.O. Box 4444
Knox City Centre
Wantirna South 3152

The Knox LAC Executive will determine if the appeal is accepted based on the new evidence supplied. This determination can be made in conjunction with the Knox LAC Jury Panel.

If the appeal is not granted based on the new evidence the complainant will be advised accordingly including reasons for the non-granting of the appeal. This decision is final and no further correspondence will be entertained.

If the appeal is granted the appeal process will be actioned in line with a normal complaint or dispute process as per Sect. 7 of this document. This includes escalating the appeal to the Knox LAC Jury Panel, EMR or LAVic. The result of any appeal escalated by the Knox LAC Executive is to be presented to the Knox LAC Executive.

Once the appeal process has been finalised, any and all decisions are to be presented to the Knox LAC for ratification and acceptance.

The Knox LAC Exec will advise the complainant of the result of the appeal process.

The decisions of the appeal process are final, no further discussion will be entered into and that the complainant has no further recourse or appeal.

12. DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Contact for Enquiries and Proposed Changes

If you have any questions regarding this document contact:

Name: Phil Matthews
 Position: Public Relations/Multimedia Co-ordinator
 Phone: 0418 521 439
 Email: photos@klac23.org.au

Record of Issues

Issue No	Issue Date	Nature of Amendment
1	Jun 2010	Initial document
2	Aug 2010	Finalised as a Controlled Document
3	Oct 2010	Updated – Jury Panel composition and Appeal process
4	June 2011	Updated – Verbal/Formal Lodgement process