



**THE  
CAMOGIE  
ASSOCIATION**  
An Cumann Camógachta

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# MATCH OFFICIAL CODE OF CONDUCT



## INTRODUCTION

The code of conduct for Match Officials outlines good practice procedures required of those officiating Camogie. It covers the behaviour of all officials before, during, and after a game, no matter the age, grade or competition. Referees and other Officials should recognise the pivotal role play in the development of Camogie and should always support one another when fulfilling their roles. This code of conduct addresses the minimum levels of behaviour, conduct and good practice procedures.

### All match officials should:

- Always have the protection and safety of players foremost.
- Set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the game.
- Work as part of a team of officials.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Above all retain integrity, consistency and uniformity.
- Match Officials should show respect for the players, coaches, spectators and the sport.
- Match Officials should always conduct themselves honourably maintaining the dignity of the position.
- Match Officials should not tolerate or allow abusive language or behaviour.
- Match Officials should demonstrate respect for diversity, sex, creed and promote equality.
- Prepare physically and mentally for every game.
- Agree not to enter or start social media conversation that brings you, any Unit of the Association, The Camogie Association and its partners, the game of Camogie or any players, teams or people officiating at games into disrepute.

### In addition, Referees should:

- Know the rules of the game and apply them fairly.
- Complete and submit accurate and concise reports within the time limits required in games in which they officiate.

- Be able to accept constructive criticism when delivered appropriately.

### **Match Officials/Referee's must not:**

- Shout, argue, abuse physically or verbally participants, supporters, parents' guardians, or any other participant at any time.
- Use unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian or homophobic references towards a participant, an opponent, coach, official or supporter by words, deeds, or gestures.
- Use foul language or provocative language/gestures or behaviour towards any participant, coach, referee/official or supporter.
- Use any other forms of abuse.
- Lose their temper.
- Do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other person on the ground of their gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- Ridicule or scold a participant for making a mistake during the sport or competition.
- Use social media to abuse participants, opponents, coaches, referees/officials, volunteers, or other individuals.
- Use social media or social media apps for the distribution of offensive content, to taunt, bully or racially abuse others.
- Use social media to implicate or undermine participants, opponents, coaches, referees/officials, volunteers, or other individuals.
- Publish or cause to be published criticism of the way or any other club/organisation/committee handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the code of conduct or rules of the sport.

- Behave or act in any way that infringes the rules of the sport or that seeks to gain an unfair advantage.
- Berate any player for their standard of play.
- Embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a player, official, volunteer, or other individuals involved in your sport.
- Undertake any other unsporting like behaviour.

## **REPORTING & SANCTIONS**

Participants should report breaches of the code of conduct to the appropriate person or committee within the club or organisation, as per the reporting/complaint's procedure.

Any breaches of the above-mentioned points within the code of conduct will be investigated by the relevant Unit or The Camogie Association and disciplinary proceedings in respect of a breach shall be conducted where necessary in accordance with the disciplinary procedures set out in their policies and procedures.

Any breaches of conduct set out in the code of conduct will be investigated by the Unit involved. Disciplinary proceedings in respect of any breach shall be conducted in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.

## Dealing with alleged breaches of the Code

The following procedure shall be followed in dealing with alleged breaches of the Code.

### Reporting alleged breaches

- (a) Alleged breaches of the code shall be reported to the relevant Secretary of the unit in which the competition took place. No later than 48 hours after the fixture. The Secretary being notified they should inform the unit THDC. The following steps should ensue : -

### Preliminary enquiries

- (b) Within three days of being notified the unit THDC Secretary should initiate a confidential process of preliminary enquiries to establish the facts.
- (c) At the conclusion of the preliminary enquiries, they will document and report their findings to the relevant Executive.

Based on the reported findings of the preliminary enquiry, the unit Executive will decide if a confidential internal investigation is required and, if so, identify, agree and document the



points of investigation and decide what party(ies) are invited to answer the points of investigation.

The unit Executive will appoint a panel of between three and five people who will hear the investigation. they will appoint a Chair and Secretary of the panel. All members of the panel must be members of either the Camogie Association or the GAA.

The Secretary of the investigative panel will provide the relevant party (ies) with 10 days formal written notice inviting them to an investigative hearing, the date of an investigative hearing, the points of investigation.

The relevant party(ies) may be accompanied to the investigative hearing with a non-legal colleague or friend.

In the event of the date of the investigative hearing not being mutually suitable on the first occasion, two further attempts will be made to find a mutually suitable date, within a maximum period of two weeks from the date of the first notice being issued.

Failure to appear before the hearing will warrant an automatic suspension until such time as the relevant party(ies) agree to appear before the investigative panel.

At the investigative hearing the points of investigation will be re-stated, and the relevant party (ies) invited to answer the points in person. The investigative panel shall only ask questions to clarify/establish the facts.

The Chair of the panel shall always uphold the relevant party(ies) right to their good name, due process, and fair procedure.

The investigative panel will confidentially document its proceedings. Relevant party(ies) will be provided with the notes documenting only the actual proceedings in which they personally participated.

At the conclusion of the investigative process, the Secretary of the investigative panel shall confidentially notify its conclusions to the Chair of the relevant unit. The Chair shall notify the same Executives as previously selected under a) above of the findings. The Chair plus Executive members from 4(a) jointly will decide on one of the following options:

- No further action, documenting the reasons why.
- Decide that the case should be referred to a disciplinary hearing.

## **Internal disciplinary hearing**

In the event of the case being referred to the Disciplinary Hearing, the Chair of the unit and the same Executives as previously selected under 4(a) shall appoint a disciplinary panel of five people. This will be comprised of the Chair of the unit, the Chair of the investigative panel and three other people who have not been involved in any way with the preliminary enquiry or investigative process to date. The panel will appoint its own Secretary. Either the Chair of the Unit or the chair of the investigative panel will act as Chair of the disciplinary panel. All members of the panel must be members of either the Camogie Association or the GAA.

The Secretary of the disciplinary panel will provide the relevant party (ies) with 10 days formal written notice inviting them to a disciplinary hearing, notice of the date of the hearing, notice of the disciplinary charges, book of evidence and the names of the members of the disciplinary panel.

The relevant party(ies) may be accompanied to the hearing with a non-legal colleague or friend.

In the event of the date of the disciplinary hearing not being mutually suitable on the first occasion, two further attempts will be made to find a mutually suitable date, within a maximum period of five weeks from the date of the first disciplinary hearing notice being issued.

Failure to appear before the hearing will warrant an automatic suspension until such time as the relevant party(ies) agree to appear before the disciplinary panel.

At the disciplinary hearing the disciplinary charges will be stated and the relevant evidence presented. The relevant party (ies) will be invited to answer the charges in person. The disciplinary panel shall only ask questions to clarify/establish the facts relating to the evidence presented at the hearing.

The Chair of the panel shall at all times uphold the relevant party(ies) right to their good name, due process and fair procedure.

The disciplinary panel will confidentially document its proceedings. Relevant party(ies) will be provided with the notes documenting only the actual proceedings in which they personally participated.

At the conclusion of the disciplinary process, the Secretary of the panel shall confidentially notify its decisions to the Secretary of the relevant Executive. The

Disciplinary Panel shall decide on at least one of the following options and issue written notification of the decision:

- No further action, documenting the reasons why
- Suspension from officiating at games for up to 3 matches
- Suspension for remainder of the competition
- Debarment
- Debarment can also be imposed pending the completion of a disciplinary action if the committee in charge considers the interest of the Association or its members may be compromised following notification of disciplinary action under this disciplinary code.
- Expulsion:
  - Where a committee has conducted a disciplinary action and is of the opinion that expulsion is the appropriate penalty but does not have jurisdiction to expel it can submit its recommendation to the parent unit having jurisdiction for same.

The decision of the disciplinary panel on each occasion can only be appealed once.

This right of appeal will be to the next highest executive excluding members who were involved in earlier stages of the process.

## **The Appeals Process**

### **Appeals shall only be acceptable if:**

- a) Lodged with the appropriate committee within seven days of receipt of the decision under challenge. Where the decision under appeal is not issued the appeal must be lodged within seven days of the date of the decision under challenge. In the case of an appeal to the national appeals committee the appeal must be lodged within ten days of



receipt in writing of the decision under challenge or the date the decision is taken where the decision is not issued in writing.

**b)** Lodged together with the appropriate fee as set out in Rule 21.3

**c)** The exact grounds of the appeal are set out including:

- The original circumstances of the alleged breach of rule
- The penalties that were imposed
- A brief outline of any previous appeals and results

**d)** The reasons for the latest appeal and the text of the rule(s) alleged to have been infringed are quoted

If the above conditions are met an appealing party shall have the right to be heard.

The Secretary of the Committee with which the appeal has been properly lodged shall:

- Send a copy of the appeal to the decision-maker or in the case of an appeal arising from an objection or counter-objection to the successful party, within three days of receipt of the appeal
- Notify all interested parties of the appeal and of the result of the hearing of same
- Furnish any party with copy extracts of relevant official records or documents upon written application. The application must be made when the objection/counter objection is submitted.
- The decision-maker must send a copy of minutes of any relevant hearing to the committee hearing the appeal.

## Hearing

- A member of the committee hearing the appeal who is a member of any unit or has a role in relation to any team or unit involved in the proceedings shall stand down from the committee adjudicating the proceedings
- The appealing party will be given ten days prior notice of the date, time and venue of the meeting at which the appeal is to be heard

- Each party may, with permission from the chair of the committee hearing the appeal, may introduce witnesses. Permission must be sought in writing from the committee at least five days prior to the date of the hearing.



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### *Summary of Key steps in case of alleged breach of code:*

- Within *48 hours* of fixture - alleged breach is reported to the Unit Secretary.
- Within *3 days* of receipt of the breach the Secretary of Unit notifies THDC.
- Within *3 days* of being notified the Secretary of the THDC must commence a confidential process to establish the facts.
- Within *7 days* the THDC will document and report their findings to the Unit Executive.

Two outcomes – No further action  
Confidential investigation

- If a confidential investigation is required, the Unit Executive will appoint a panel of between 3 and 5 people within *7 days*.
- *10 days'* notice for invitation to investigative hearing. (2 further invitations within *14 days* of initial date)

**Further investigation** – 10 days' notice (if the first date is not mutually agreeable panel have *5 weeks* for 2 further invitations)

Appeal – *10 days'* notice



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