

**Hillside Football Club**

**Code of Conduct**

**March 2018**

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Code of Conduct Principals

The Hillside Football Club (HFC) is guided by the following Code of Conduct principles.

The HFC:

* Wishes to operate in an environment where people show respect for others and their property;
  + Respect is defined as consideration for another’s physical and emotional wellbeing and possessions, to ensure no damage or deprivation is caused to either.
* Wishes to operate in an environment that is free from harassment;
  + Harassment is defined as any action directed at an individual or group that creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.
* Wishes to operate in a non-discriminatory environment. Respect the right, dignity and worth of every human being, treating everyone equally regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexuality or religion.
* Wants every member (players, coaches, committee, volunteers etc) to enjoy a fun and friendly football club where everyone feels welcome and included.

Social Media Policy

Introduction

Over the past few years, social media has become an important and integral part of connecting with members and sponsors. It is dynamic, fluid and increasingly powerful in its ability to capture community sentiment and often shapes the conversations we have with each other. With this comes a degree of ambiguity as to what constitutes ethical behaviour when participating in social media.

The Hillside Football Club (HFC):

* Acknowledges that social media has increasing prevalence in both the professional and private lives of its members;
* Recognises the value in using social media to build more meaningful relationships with fans, communities, sponsors and other relevant stakeholders;
* Embraces that social media platforms offer the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content in ways that can be mutually beneficial.

The HFCs Social Media Policy sets out the HFCs expectations of its players, members, committee, coaches and officials when engaging with social media.

Types of Social Media

Recognising that commonly held perceptions of social media are likely to change from time-to-time, “social media” for the purposes of this policy is not limited to certain specific platforms or the ones listed below. However, the HFC considers each of the following platforms/internet programs/digital interfaces as social media for the purposes of this policy:

* External and internal social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Bebo, Linked In, MySite and Yammer);
* Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube);
* Micro-blogging sites (e.g. Twitter);
* Weblogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications (e.g. “comments” or “your say” feature on theage.com.au);
* Forums and discussion boards (e.g. Big Footy, Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups);
* Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia);
* Instant messaging (including SMS and MMS);
* Vod and Podcasting; and
* Any other website that allows individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

**Social Media Policy,** Continued

The HFC promotes responsible use of social media and requires its members to take responsibility for their own words and actions.

Any official team page representing the HFC will need to have a member of the executive committee as a member. They have the right to ask for any post they deem inappropriate to be removed immediately.

Unacceptable Content

HFC members will not post unacceptable content. Unacceptable content can include, but is not limited to:

* Being used to abuse, harass, stalk or threaten others;
* Being libellous, knowingly false or misrepresents another person;
* Infringing upon a copyright or trademark;
* Violating an obligation of confidentiality;
* Violating the privacy of others;
* Being defamatory towards the HFC or our governing body - the Essendon District Football League (EDFL);
* Sending inappropriate photos.

Photography and Privacy

All players, members, committee, coaches and officials acknowledge that they may be subject to photography, videotaping, live radio or television broadcasts and their consent is implied with membership application. All photos, videos or other media are to be used for official Hillside Football Club purposes only.

Breaches

Any individual or group of people suspected or alleged to be in breach of the Social Media Policy will be subject to any and/or all the following:

* Investigation of their conduct by the HFC Committee;
* Notice to appear before the Executive or Disciplinary Committee;
* Notice to appear before the full HFC Committee;
* Investigation of their conduct by the EDFL.

Penalties for substantiated breaches can include fines, suspensions, de-registration/ expulsion or any other penalty deemed suitable and where necessary, referral to the relevant authorities (i.e. instances of cyber stalking, criminal harassment).

Complaints Policy

Introduction

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

* All complaints will be taken seriously – both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and be given the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
* Irrelevant matters will not be considered – decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
* Any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to the EDFL.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

Complaints Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Child Protection Officer, Secretary, Senior/Junior Vice President, Team manager or Coach) will:

* Listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem and ask what the complainant would like to happen;
* Explain the different options available to help resolve the problem;
* Take notes; and
* Maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

* Supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about;
* Bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
* Gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
* Seeking advice from the EDFL or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
* Referring the complaint to the EDFL; and
* Referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

Complaints Policy, Continued

In situations where a complaint is referred directly to the EDFL, the club will:

* Co-operate fully and ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised;
* Where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
* Act on EDFL recommendations.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

Disciplinary Measures

Our club will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

* Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
* Be fair and reasonable;
* Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach;
* Be determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of the game.

Possible measures that may be taken include:

* Verbal and/or written apology;
* Counselling to address behaviour;
* Withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;
* Suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity, de-registration from the club for a period of time or permanently;
* A fine; or
* Any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

The club’s Disciplinary Committee will hear all cases that are unable to be addressed at team/coordinator/VP level. They will make recommendations for any disciplinary action to the club’s Executive Committee for approval. Disciplinary measures will be provided to the relevant parties in writing within a reasonable time of any breaches.

Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions of or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to the EDFL. Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or because the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.

Alcohol Policy

Our Commitment

Our club supports the responsible consumption of alcohol and takes any inappropriate behaviour that results from excessive drinking very seriously.

This policy applies at all games, events, celebrations or end of season trips that involve consumption of alcohol whether at the Hillside Football Club or any other venue or location.

Be aware of your actions and behavior at all times when drinking alcohol as it can have a serious impact on your personal and the Hillside Football Club’s reputation.

Serving Alcohol

Alcohol will be served in compliance with the requirements of our club's liquor licence and in accordance with the safety and wellbeing of patrons.

* Only trained servers will be permitted to serve alcohol. They are not permitted to drink while serving alcohol;
* The liquor licence will be displayed at the bar;
* Excessive or rapid consumption of alcohol will be discouraged;
* A person aged under 18 will not be permitted to be behind the bar under any circumstances;
* A committee member will be present at events where alcohol is served.

Intoxicated Patrons

* Alcohol will not be served to any person who is intoxicated. Signs of intoxication include slurred speech, impaired balance, poor coordination, reduced inhibition, aggressive, belligerent and disrespectful behavior;
* Servers will follow procedures, provided in their training by the Liquor Licensing Commission for dealing with and refusing alcohol to intoxicated patrons;
* Intoxicated patrons will be asked to leave and may face other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Underage Drinking

* People aged under 18 will not knowingly be served alcohol;
* Staff will request proof of age, where appropriate and only photo ID will be accepted.

Safe Transport

Club members and bar staff will encourage intoxicated patrons to take safe transport home.

Alcohol Policy, Continued

Food and Other Drinks

* A range of snacks and meals will be available when alcohol is served;
* A selection of low-alcohol and alcohol-free drinks, such as water and soft drink will be made available at the bar and at social functions.

Promoting the Responsible Use of Alcohol

* Posters about responsible drinking and standard drinks measures will be displayed at the club;
* We will not advertise, promote or serve alcohol at junior games;
* We will educate members and supporters about our alcohol policy through our Code of Conduct, website, newsletter and other club communications.

What We Ask You To Do

All members and club personnel are required to comply with the following:

* Drink and behave responsibly at all club functions, events and trips away;
* Do not drink alcohol at the club, club functions, matches or while away on trips if you are aged under 18;
* Do not supply alcohol to team members if they are aged under 18;
* Do not bring alcohol or drink alcohol while at games (e.g. as a spectator, in your role as a coach, as an official or as a volunteer);
* Do not encourage others to drink alcohol excessively;
* Do not spike another person's drink;
* Do not take any glass (e.g. beer bottles, drinking glasses) outside the clubroom. Purchase cans or transfer your drink to a plastic cup if you want to drink outside.

Non-Compliance

The club will take action for breaches of behaviour and responsibilities outlined in this policy.

* If members or other club personnel become intoxicated at the club or other social events, they will be asked to leave. Ongoing instances of in-toxification will be in breach of our Code of Conduct and can result in disciplinary action (e.g. suspension or termination of membership);
* Spiking of drinks is a criminal offence that can be reported to police by victims. It can lead to serious police charges being laid against the offender(s). Separate action can be taken as a breach of our Code of Conduct and the EDFL’s policy to provide for the protection, safety and welfare of members;

Alcohol Policy, Continued

* Serving alcohol to a minor is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police and the relevant liquor licensing authority by victims and their parents. It can lead to heavy fines. Separate action can be taken as a breach of our Code of Conduct, our club’s Child Safety Standards and the EDFL’s policy to provide for the protection, safety and welfare of children;
* Any person aged under 18 found to have consumed alcohol while at a club function or in the care of the club (e.g. away game matches, end of season trips, etc) may be suspended for all or part of the remainder of the season/competition. The young person’s parents shall be advised.
* Any member or club personnel found to have behaved inappropriately because of over-consumption of alcohol (e.g. sexual harassment, verbal abuse, physical assault, neglect of a child) will face disciplinary action as outlined in our Code of Conduct and/or referral to an appropriate authority e.g. Victoria Police.

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Drug and Smoking Policy

Our Commitment

For the purposes of this policy, the term “drugs” means a drug of dependence.

Our club has **zero tolerance** for the use, possession, cultivation or trafficking of drugs.

This policy applies at all games, events, celebrations or end of season trips whether at the Hillside Football Club or any other venue or location.

It is against the law to use, possess, cultivate or traffic drugs. The penalties for these different offences vary greatly from a caution to serious terms of imprisonment.

There are long lists of the kinds of drugs that are prohibited in the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981. The most common drugs are, but not limited to, cannabis, heroin, amphetamines (speed), cocaine, LSD and MDMA (ecstasy). Synthetic substances are also included.

What We Will Do

* Endeavour to provide a drug and smoke free environment for all members and other club personnel;
* Provide a confidential process for anyone wanting to discuss the use of drugs;
* Assist any members or other club personnel seek drug or smoking counselling, treatment or any other professional advice or support.

What We Ask You To Do

All members and club personnel are required to comply with the following:

* Do not use, possess, cultivate or traffic drugs;
* Do not turn up to games, training or any other club event under the influence of drugs;
* Do not use, bring or supply drugs at any club events (including away games, end of season trips, etc) and any other celebrations connected to the club;
* It is now illegal to smoke cigarettes on the club grounds. The only place you may smoke is outside the club grounds. Anyone caught smoking in an inappropriate place will be asked to leave the area. Ongoing/continued breaches may result in further action being taken by the club Committee.

Non-Compliance

The club will take action for breaches of behaviour and responsibilities outlined in this policy.

* If members or other club personnel are seen with drugs they will be asked to leave immediately and an incident will be reported to the club Committee for further action;
* Any use of drugs will be in breach of our Code of Conduct and can result in disciplinary action (e.g. suspension, termination of membership, etc) and/or referral to an appropriate authority e.g. Victoria Police;
* Any member or other club personnel found to have behaved inappropriately while under the influence of drugs (e.g. sexual harassment, verbal abuse, physical assault, neglect of a child) will face disciplinary action as outlined in our Code of Conduct.

Bringing the Club/Game into Disrepute

Members or other club personnel must not bring the Hillside Football Club, the EDFL or the game of AFL football into disrepute.

What Constitutes ‘Disrepute’

Without limiting the generality of the above statement, members or other club personnel will be taken as having brought the game into disrepute if any of the following occurs:

* Discriminatory behaviour, including public disparagement of, discrimination against, or vilification of a person on account of an attribute;
* Harassment, including sexual harassment or any unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated where that reaction is reasonable in the circumstances;
* Offensive behaviour, including offensive, obscene, provocative or insulting gestures, language or chanting;
* Provocation or incitement of hatred or violence;
* Spectator or crowd violence;
* Intimidation of Match Officials, which may take the form of (but is not restricted to) derogatory or abusive words or gestures toward a Match Official or the use of violence or threats to pressure a Match Official to take or omit to take certain action regardless of where such action is taken;
* Forgery and falsification, including creation of a false document, forgery of a document or signature, the making of a false claim or providing inaccurate or false information on a prescribed form;
* Corruption, including offering a benefit or an advantage to a player or an official in an attempt to incite him or her to violate HFC Statutes, EDFL Statutes, AFLV Statutes, AFL Statutes or the Laws;
* Abuse of position to obtain personal benefit;
* Commission or charge of a criminal offence; or
* Any other conduct, behaviour or statement that materially injures the reputation and goodwill of the Hillside Football Club or football generally.

Any players, officials, members, supporters and anyone else representing Hillside Football Club in breach of this policy may be warned or asked to leave the area by a club official (e.g. Coach, Team Manager, Match Day Official, etc).

All reported breaches (from an HFC official or another club official) will result in an incident report being completed for follow up action deemed appropriate by the club Committee.

Members and other club personnel are entitled to have their privacy respected and this Code is not intended to apply to private activities engaged in by members or other club personnel that are not in the public domain.