

**WILLOUGHBY SOCCER CLUB  
RULES OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE CODE**

**A. RULES OF CONDUCT**

1. The Willoughby Soccer Club Rules of Conduct and Disciplinary Code shall, at a minimum, comply with all United States Soccer Federation (“USSF”), Ohio Youth Soccer Association North (“OYSAN”), US Youth Soccer procedures and policies.
2. The Willoughby Soccer Club (“WSC”) has the authority to formulate conduct and discipline standards that are stricter than those of the above-named entities.
3. The following persons are subject to the policies and procedures outlined herein:
  - a. Players on all WSC teams, including, without limitation, recreational teams, travel teams and tournament teams (“WSC Teams”).
  - b. All WSC Teams.
  - c. All Coaches including assistants and team managers.
  - d. Spectators watching any WSC Team in any practice, game, match or event including all parents and all family members.
  - e. Referees, including all assistants, assignors, instructors and assessors.
  - f. All WSC officials, including the Board of Directors.
4. The WSC Board of Directors has developed and approved this Rules of Conduct and Discipline Code (this “Code”) to be effective as of the Spring 2012 Season.
5. Any of these individuals or groups listed herein that are determined to have violated the letter or intent of this Code will be subject to disciplinary action by the:
  - a. WSC Board of Directors or a Disciplinary Committee established pursuant to this Code.
  - b. Any other WSC associated body, such as OYSAN.
6. Discipline by entity shall not preclude disciplinary action by any other entity (including the City of Willoughby or City of Willoughby Hills). The WSC Board of Directors reserves the right to refer any person to another entity for disciplinary action in advance of, following, simultaneously or in lieu of disciplinary action by the WSC Board of Directors or a Disciplinary Committee.

**B. DEFINITIONS**

1. **Probation** is defined as a period in which an offender's fitness for membership in WSC, participation in WSC events or active status on a team is in jeopardy based upon the existence or alleged existence of a violation of this Code.
2. **Suspension** is defined as no participation in the areas in which one is suspended whether as player, coach, assistant coach, team, parent, spectator or association official. This is a formal process.
3. **Suspension of a player** is defined as suspension from any competition, for any team on which the player is rostered in the WSC for the time period specified.
4. **Suspension of a coach/assistant coach** is defined as suspension from coaching any WSC Team by the offending coach/assistant coach for the time period specified.
5. **Suspension of a team** is defined as suspension from any WSC sanctioned competition for the time period specified.

6. **Dismissal** is defined as loss of membership in the Willoughby Soccer Club and the right to participate in any WSC activities, without refund or payment of any credit for participation.
7. **Banning** is defined as no participation in any team activity for the length of the discipline. This is an informal, intra-team discipline measure.
8. **Dissent** shall be defined as anything that demonstrates continuous disagreement with game officials either by action or word.
9. **Threats** shall be defined as remarks, verbal statements, gestures or physical act not resulting in bodily contact that carry the implied threat of physical harm against an individual or their property.
10. **Referee abuse** shall be defined as the use of foul or abusive action or language toward a referee
11. **Assault** is an intentional act of physical violence. Assault includes, but is not limited to, the following acts upon another individual: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting at or on, grabbing, poking, deliberate bodily running into, the act of kicking or throwing an object at, and damaging personal property.
12. **Season** is defined as any scheduled season of play (for example, fall season, spring season or an indoor soccer session or sessions) during the Club Year.
13. **Club Year** means August 1 of any calendar year continuing until July 31 of the following calendar year.

### C. CLASSES OF MISCONDUCT

**Actions and conduct considered inappropriate by the WSC Board of Directors have been designated by class. The following classifications describe behavior at any WSC-sponsored activity (e.g. games, practices, clinics, etc.):**

1. Class 1
  - a. use of profanity by word, sign or in written form;
  - b. inciting *or* participating in disruptive behavior;
  - c. making insulting or derogatory remarks or gestures about any individual or group at any time;
  - d. any coach or assistant coach receiving a verbal warning for conduct from the referee during a match;
  - e. abuse of referee and/or excessive dissent;
  - f. a player receiving third yellow card during a Season, or a red card during a match;
2. Class 2
  - a. making threats to any Player, Coach, WSC Team, Spectator, Referee or WSC official;
  - b. making threatening gestures;
  - c. a second Class 1 offense during a Season;
  - d. a coach, assistant coach or spectator is expelled or removed from a match.
3. Class 3
  - a. a player physically striking a player or fighting with another player before, during or immediately after a game;
  - b. a second Class 2 offense or three or more Class 1 offenses during a Club Year;
  - c. making a racist remark or racially offensive gesture;

4. Class 4
  - a. assault of a coach, assistant coach, team manager, spectator, referee or association official
  - b. willful or malicious destruction of property
  - c. second Class 3 offense or three or more Class 2 offenses during a Club Year;
  - d. a coach, assistant coach, team manager, spectator or referee assaulting, physically striking or making intentional harmful physical contact with a player at any time.
5. Class 5 – As defined in USSF Rule 3042 (Misconduct of Game Officials)

#### **D. PLAYERS**

1. A player determined by the WSC Board of Directors or a Disciplinary Committee to have committed a violation of this Code is subject to minimum disciplinary action by the WSC Board or Disciplinary Committee as follows:
  - a. Class 1 - 1 game suspension or letter of reprimand;
  - b. Class 2 - 2 game suspension and letter of reprimand;
  - c. Class 3 - 3 game suspension and letter of reprimand;
  - d. Class 4 - indefinite suspension and letter of reprimand
2. A player ejected or expelled from a match is subject to minimum disciplinary action as follows:
  - a. 1 ejection – suspension for the next game for all WSC Teams on which the player is rostered;
  - b. 2 ejections in any Season - suspension for the next two games for all WSC Teams on which the player is rostered;
  - c. 3 ejections in any Club Year - suspension for the next three games for all WSC Teams on which the player is rostered;
  - d. 4 ejections in any Club Year – suspended from all WSC Teams on which the player is rostered for the remainder of the Club Year and the following Club Year.

Suspensions under Section D2 are automatic and suspension must be served at the next scheduled game or games regardless of any appeal. Only suspensions under Sections D(2)(c) or D(2)(d) may be appealed.

#### **E. NON-PLAYERS**

1. A coach, assistant coach, spectator, referee or other official found to have violated this Code by the WSC Board of Directors or a Disciplinary Committee is subject to minimum disciplinary action as follows:
  - a. Class 1 - one game suspension and/or letter of reprimand;
  - b. Class 2- two game suspension, letters of reprimand;
  - c. Class 3, 4, or 5 - indefinite suspension or dismissal.

#### **F. COACHES AND TEAMS; COACH IMPOSED BAN.**

1. Each team and its coach are responsible for the actions and personal conduct of all persons involved with the team including players, coach, assistant coach, parents, family members and spectators.

2. Each team and its coach are responsible to ensure actions of the team and all persons involved with the team both on and off the field do not bring discredit upon the team or the WSC.
3. Each team and all persons involved with the team are required to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner under all circumstances and to exhibit appropriate behavior before, during and after games, and on any other occasions when the group could be identified as a team.
4. For WSC Teams whose general conduct is determined by a disciplinary review by the WSC Board of Directors or the Disciplinary Committee to be unsatisfactory the following disciplinary actions may be applied according to the principle of progressive discipline, severity and frequency of incidents of misconduct.
  - a. Letter of reprimand to the coach and/or team;
  - b. Team suspension for a period of time with all games scheduled for that time to be forfeited;
  - c. Removal or suspension of the team coach
  - d. Team disbandment without refund.
5. As in any adult-child instructional relationship (school, scouting, etc) each coach has the authority maintain the minimum amount of discipline necessary for a conducive and constructive team atmosphere. If other informal avenues of instilling discipline have failed, the coach may ban a player, assistant coach or spectator from a team activity (either a practice and/or game). This is informal team discipline only and does not carry the sanction of an official WSC suspension. When this happens, the coach will notify the banned party (and, if a player, the parent) and a member of the WSC Board of Directors within 24 hours of the incident. If, in the opinion of the coach, the incident(s) in question warrants a more serious sanction, or there are repeated discipline problems with the same individual, the coach will notify the WSC Board of Directors formally via the process described in para. J. In any case, a coach will not ban any person for more than one practice/game per Season.

#### **G. PROPERTY DAMAGE**

1. A player or team responsible for willful property damage is required to pay all lawful claims within 45 days of receiving said claim.
2. If claims are not paid within the prescribed time period, the player or team will be placed on probation. Any person on probation will be dismissed from the WSC if the have not taken the actions required to have such probation lifted within ninety (90) days;
3. Reinstatement of membership in good standing from probation will not be considered until proof of payment is made to the WSC Board of Directors.

#### **H. UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR**

1. Individuals or groups found to have committed the following acts are subject to disciplinary action as determined by the WSC Board of Directors or a Disciplinary Committee:
  - a. Falsification of documents including but not limited to registration data, birth certificates, rosters, insurance claims or proxies;
  - b. Allowing unregistered or ineligible players to participate in games;

- c. Misappropriation or mishandling of association funds.
2. The disciplinary actions listed below shall be applied by the WSC Board of Directors or a Disciplinary Committee in their discretion according to the severity and frequency of the offense(s):
  - a. Letter of reprimand with a copy to the following at the discretion of the WSC Board of Directors or Disciplinary Committee, OYSAN, and other organizations/individuals or governmental authorities as required by affiliates of the WSC or applicable law;
  - b. Suspension for a specific period of time;
  - c. Suspension from specific competitions;
  - d. Dismissal from the WSC.

#### **I. FORMS AND REPORTS**

1. A Player/Parent Acknowledgment Form will be signed by both Parents/Guardians and/or the Player before being rostered on a Recreational team, it being acknowledged that such Acknowledgment Form may be presented for review during electronic registration and electronic acknowledgement shall be considered sufficient for the purpose of this Section I(1). The player is considered ineligible until the Registrar has received the original signed Form or electronic acknowledgement. Coaches shall distribute copies of this Policy to all parents at the beginning of the Fall Season.
2. Coaches/assistant coaches and referees are obligated to report all incidents (including those described in Section C, they witness in writing (if necessary). Reports will be as factual and detailed as possible and will be made to the WSC Board of Directors or the club President as necessary.
3. Referees will fill out the USSF Match Report for any match incident which, in the referee's opinion, would warrant corrective or disciplinary action.

#### **J. FORMAL PROCEEDINGS**

1. All reports to the WSC Board of Directors requiring formal disciplinary action will be sent as soon as practicable. The WSC Board of Directors will form a Disciplinary Committee to manage matters demanding immediate attention when it is impractical or untimely to call a full WSC Board of Directors meeting. All actions of the Discipline Committee are subject to review by the WSC Board of Directors. A Disciplinary Committee has the authority to impose any penalty up to and including suspension for up to 30 days or until the next meeting of the WSC Board of Directors meeting, whichever occurs first.
2. A Disciplinary Committee will consist of five individuals of which up to two may be members of the Board of Directors. Up to four individuals may be coaches or assistant coaches. One individual who is not a coach or member of the Board of Directors (an independent member of the committee) is recommended, but not required. The Willoughby Soccer Club (WSC) President may sit on the Committee with full voting rights if any one of the five designated members cannot attend. If a Disciplinary Committee is formed with respect to the actions of a coach or assistant coach, no coach in the same division shall be a part of such Disciplinary Committee. The WSC Board of Directors will be notified of any action taken by the Disciplinary Committee.

3. In the event the party disciplined wishes to appeal the decision of a Disciplinary Committee or a suspension of a player under Sections D(2)(c) or D2(d) the party should contact the President of the WSC or the designated OYSAN official (see OYSAN Discipline, Appeals and Referee Assault and Abuse Policy). All decisions of the WSC Board of Directors are final.

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