

**THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF  
HONG KONG, CHINA**



**2024/2025  
DISCIPLINARY & ETHICS CODE**

**English Version  
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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

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Football is one of the most famous sporting events in around the world, with hundreds of millions of people seeking to enjoy the same through various means. Football is regulated by a set of detailed, fair and impartial rules which is regarded as the “Laws of the Game” in which, above all, the spirit of fair play is to prevail so as to ensure that all matches should be conducted in a fair, safe and entertaining manner.

During the course of each and every match, the referee shall have absolute authority to make decisions for the purpose of ensuring that all participants of the game (whether the players or team officials, as defined below) shall abide by the relevant rules of the Laws of the Game.

The match organizer is entitled to consult the game supervisor(s) and/or refer to television recordings as means to secure and heighten the spirit of fair play if it is deemed necessary and appropriate to do so.

During the course of each and every match, the decisions made by a referee relating to the match shall remain as final decisions.

The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee (the “Disciplinary & Ethics Committee”) of the Hong Kong Football Association (the “HKFA”) shall be the authority in determining breaches of the Laws of the Game, the league rules of the HKFA, the Memorandum and Articles of Association of HKFA, as well as any other applicable rules and regulations.

This Disciplinary Code is compiled for the purpose of providing guidelines to the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, the appeal committee (the “Appeal Committee”), the Secretariat of the HKFA (the “HKFA Secretariat”) and other relevant individuals in handling disciplinary matters. The sanctions as set out in this Article are minimum sanctions where the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee would consider all other relevant factors before making an appropriate decision. The functions of both the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee and the Appeal Committee shall be governed by HKFA’s Code of Conduct.

The HKFA wishes to promote the spirit of fair play by the adoption of this Disciplinary Code and the Laws of the Game.

## **Chapter 2: Disciplinary & Ethics Committee – Composition, Jurisdiction and Scope of Work**

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### **1. Composition**

- 1.1 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee is one of the standing-committees and formed in accordance with the Articles of Association of HKFA. All of the members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee (including its chairman and vice-chairman) shall be appointed by HKFA's Board of Directors for a term of 2 years, as determined in accordance with the football seasons determined by HKFA.
- 1.2 The quorum of a meeting convened by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee (the "Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting") shall comprise of 3 appointed members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.
- 1.3 Members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall not take up any actual posting with the HKFA and/or its any affiliated Club.
- 1.4 In the event that the chairman or the vice-chairman of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee is unable to attend the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting, the chairman for that meeting shall be appointed mutually amongst its attending members.
- 1.5 The general secretary of HKFA or its appointed staff member shall act as the secretary in respect of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meetings. The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall also invite HKFA's Head of Refereeing to attend the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meetings who, if absent, shall be replaced by a referees instructor so as to provide professional opinion on Laws of the Game.
- 1.6 If any of the members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee has any relationship with the matter(s) that is/are yet to be handled or is/are the subject of the upcoming hearing, he must disclose the said relationship with the matter(s) (including any individual or Club, as defined below) and has to seek the approval of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, failing which the same shall be treated as misconduct and will be handled by the Board of Directors accordingly.
- 1.7 A resolution in writing, signed by all the Committee Members for the time being entitled to receive notice of a meeting of the Committee Members, shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Committee Members duly convened and held.

### **2. Jurisdiction and Scope of Work**

#### **2.1 Scope of Work**

All disciplinary matters relating to Matches (as defined below) organized, co-organized, recognized or as participated by HKFA (including but not limited to all football Matches in connection with the premier league, the first division, the second division, the third division, the reserve division, the women, the youth, the women's youth and the futsal competition) shall be handled by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee. The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee is also entitled to handle disciplinary matters relating to all formal, international, friendly and youth Matches involving the Hong Kong representative teams of all levels, the league selection.

teams and the affiliated Clubs, whether those Matches are held locally or overseas. This Disciplinary Code is also applicable to all clubs registered with HKFA, the Team Officials, Players, coaching staff members, team supporters, officials or other individuals enforcing the relevant rules in connection with the Matches.

## 2.2 Scope of Application: Geographical extent and timing

The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall also be responsible for handling any act of misconduct which take place within the field of play prior to the commencement of a Match, during a Match as well as after the completion of a Match.

## 2.3 Jurisdiction

2.3.1 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall have authority to handle disciplinary matters including but not limited to the following:

- a. All misconduct and disciplinary matters (including but not limited to yellow card and red card of Players, as well as any misconduct involving clubs, their Players and the Team Officials), act(s) that is/are in breach of any Laws of the Game, and any misconduct and disciplinary matters that have not been handled by the referee or other individuals enforcing the relevant rules in connection with the Matches;
- b. Amendments of erroneous disciplinary judgments made by referees;
- c. Lengthening of the number of Matches relating to the suspension of any Player caused by a red card;
- d. Additional sanctions (e.g. by way of a fine).

(Refer to AFC Dis. Code Article 77)

2.3.2 Clubs and/or the Team Officials allowing suspended or unqualified Players to participate in Matches or due to force majeure (including but not limited to cause by managerial and/or administrative mismanagement) that led to the cancellation of and/or the inability to conduct the Match;

2.3.3 Severe repercussions caused by the misconduct on the part of the clubs, their Players and/or Team Officials (for instance, suspension of Matches, severe injuries sustained by Team Officials and/or Players, intervention by the Hong Kong Police, riots caused by supporters of the Clubs).

## 2.4 Disciplinary rules and the relevant procedures

The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall have authority to handle disciplinary matters and impose sanctions on the Players, Team Officials of Clubs and all other relevant individuals in accordance with this Disciplinary Code, the Articles of Association of the HKFA, the Competition Rules determined by the HKFA and any other relevant rules, regulations or guidelines including those promulgated by the Federation Internationale de Football Association and the Asian Football Confederation, provided that those rules and regulations are not in conflict with this Disciplinary Code. Unless otherwise specified in this Disciplinary Code or in any guidelines determined by the Board of Directors, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall decide on its own as to the relevant procedures involved.

### **3. Definitions**

In this Disciplinary Code, unless otherwise specified:

- 3.1 A “Match” refers to a football match as specified in Article 2.1 above, including but not limited to all football Matches in connection with the premier league, the reserve division, the first-third division (the first-third division leagues are defined as the same competition), the women, the youth, the women’s youth and the futsal competition.
- 3.2 A “Club” refers to any football club that has signed up for any competition organized by HKFA, including but not limited to all clubs participating in the premier league, the reserve division, the first-third division, the women, the youth , the women’s youth and the futsal competition.
- 3.3 A “Player” refers to any football player registered with HKFA.
- 3.4 A “Team Official” refers to a staff member of clubs registered with HKFA and whom assists with matters relating to football for any Club (excluding Players), regardless of whether or not such staff member has a formal title or not.
- 3.5 A “Report” refers to a report prepared by a referee in Chapter 3 hereof and/or all other reports and/or complaints made by other individuals.
- 3.6 “HKFA” refers to the The Football Association of Hong Kong, China.
- 3.7 Force Majeure refers to of any event affecting the performance by any party hereto of any provision of this Agreement arising from or attributable to acts, events, omissions or accidents (or the reasonable threat thereof) which are beyond the reasonable control of such party and which could not reasonably have been prevented by such party including, without limitation, any abnormally inclement weather, flood, lightning, storm, fire, explosion, earthquake, subsidence, structural damage, epidemic or other natural physical disaster, failure or shortage of power supplies, war, military operations, riot, crowd disorder, strike, lock-outs or other industrial action, terrorist action, civil commotion and any legislation, regulation, ruling or omissions (including failure to grant any necessary permissions for reasons outside the control of either party) of any relevant government, court or any competent national or international authority, any party is delayed in , or prevented from, performing any of the provisions of this Agreement (otherwise than payment of any monies) then such delay or non-performance shall not be deemed to be a breach of this Agreement and no loss or damage shall be claimed by the other party by reason thereof.

## **Chapter 3: Procedures and hearing arrangements in relation to handling a Caution, Expulsion and other act(s) of misconduct**

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### **1. Procedures in relation to handling a Caution, Expulsion and other act(s) of misconduct**

#### **1.1 Referee's report**

- 1.1.1 In relation to a Caution administered in a premier league Match in the form of a yellow card, the referee must complete the referee's incident report accurately and submit the same to HKFA immediately after the Match.
- 1.1.2 In relation to a Caution administered in a Match in divisions other than the premier league in the form of a yellow card, the referee must complete the referee's incident report accurately and submit the same to HKFA within 48 hours after the Match.
- 1.1.3 In relation to the handling of an Expulsion in the form of a red card and other types of misconduct, the referee must complete the referee's incident report accurately and submit the same to HKFA within 48 hours after the Match.

#### **1.2 Report received from other individuals**

In the event that the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee has not received any of the reports mentioned in Article 1.1 above, the HKFA Secretariat shall still have the authority to receive any report and/or complaint made during or after a Match by any other individual relevant to the Match (including any individual involving the Club, Player, staff member of HKFA, Match Review Panel of HKFA and/or any other individual who holds a job title with HKFA). Upon receipt of such report, the HKFA Secretariat will have the authority to handle any act of misconduct as indicated in the said report or complaint and passed to Disciplinary & Ethics Committee according to disciplinary procedure.

#### **1.3 Notification to be given by HKFA to a Club and its Player and/or Team Official in relation to offences and sanctions (if applicable)**

- 1.3.1 In relation to an Expulsion (including that resulted from the accumulation of 2 yellow cards), the HKFA Secretariat shall send by ordinary post, e-mail or facsimile a contest reply form ("Contest Reply Form") together with a copy of the referee's report to the secretary of the Club. These documents are deemed to be effective upon HKFA's issuance and, accordingly, a Club is not entitled to rely on any alleged failure in receiving these documents as its defence. The secretary of the Club shall forward the copy of the referee's report to the relevant Player and/or Team Official. At the same time, the Club shall be informed of the relevant scales of punishment (if applicable) and the date of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting during which the relevant offence(s) will be dealt with. Generally speaking, a Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting will normally be convened within 14 days after the date on which the offence(s) has/have been committed. The Club shall inform HKFA as to whether or not they wish to contest the charge in accordance with the procedures listed below. Separately, hearings in relation to expulsions would also be announced on the website of HKFA.

1.3.2 In relation to other acts of misconduct, the HKFA Secretariat shall inform the person being charged and the relevant Club in writing (by ordinary post, e-mail or facsimile) as to the details concerning the said misconduct as well as the arrangements for the hearing relating to the same.

#### 1.4 Other Matters

1.4.1 The HKFA Secretariat shall conduct a preliminary investigation on any alleged offence(s) as it has been vested with the authority to do so, and submit a report on the same to the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.

1.4.2 In conducting the aforesaid investigation set out in Article 1.4.1 above, the Player, Club, Team Official and/or any other relevant individuals shall provide full assistance and submit all necessary information and documents and by such deadline(s) as stipulated by HKFA.

1.4.3 In handling any act of misconduct, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall, apart from considering the referee's report (including those made by the assistant referees and the fourth official), statements and submissions of the persons being charged, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall also consider at the same time the duty officer's report, the game supervisor's Report, as well as reports from other enforcement officers (including staff members of HKFA and other individuals who holds a job title with HKFA), reports from the Hong Kong Police, as well as video recordings which might provide further information.

1.4.4 In the event that several Players and/or Team Officials of Club(s) are involved in acts of serious misconduct and/or acts that bring the relevant Club(s) into disrepute, the referee and the assistant referees (**and Video Assistant Referees, if appointed**) shall make their best endeavours to identify the said individuals involved. The referee and assistant referees shall make their best endeavours to identify the number imprinted on the back of the jerseys of the Players, and identify the names and/or other distinctive features of other individuals involved. The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall resort to any other appropriate methods to carry out a thorough investigation of the incidents (e.g. by referring to reports prepared by the HKFA Secretariat and/or video recordings).

## 2. Contest and Hearing

2.1 In the event that a Club, a Player or another person being charged disagrees with the charge as specified in a report, he/she shall have the right to apply to HKFA and contest the same if he/she pleads not guilty of the charge as stated in the report. However, in relation to contesting against a Caution and an Expulsion:-

2.1.1 No contest for a Caution shall be accepted (unless the Player/Team Official being charged can clearly prove that he/she has been wrongly recognized by the referee).

2.1.2 If a Player/Team Official has been expelled as a result of having accumulated 2 Cautions in the same Match, no contest shall be accepted (unless the Player/Team Official being charged can clearly prove that he/she has been wrongly recognized by the referee).



- 2.1.3 A Player/Team Official may contest an Expulsion according to the standard disciplinary procedures.
- 2.2 To contest a charge (whether in relation to a Caution, an Expulsion or other acts of misconduct), the person being charged has to submit a complete application in writing as follows:
  - 2.2.1 In the Contest Reply Form, fill in the reason(s) to contest and provide a statement from the relevant Player, the Official and/or the person being charged;
  - 2.2.2 Pay the contest deposit as set by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee from time to time;
  - 2.2.3 The application is regarded as complete if, and only if, the person being charged has sent the required documentation and contest deposit to the HKFA Secretariat within 5 working days from the date on which the HKFA has issued the relevant notification (if the person being charged is a Player, he must send the required documentation and contest deposit through the relevant Club). The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee will not entertain any incomplete and/or late applications for the purpose of contesting any charge.
  - 2.2.4 In all documentation submitted to the HKFA Secretariat as aforesaid (including the Contest Reply Form, the relevant written statements, reports and explanatory letters), the person being charged must provide clear reason(s) for contest and sign to endorse the same as well as to ensure that all other necessary signatures are obtained, failing which the HKFA Secretariat shall not accept the said documentation. In addition, any additional attachments must also be clearly specified in the said documentation.
- 2.3 If within 5 working days (as mentioned in Article 2.2.3 above) the person being charged has not returned a complete application for contest, or that the HKFA Secretariat has failed to receive a complete application for contest, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall regard the same as the relevant Club and/or Player and/or the person being charged having accepted the referee's report and not intending to contest the charge. The Committee shall then deal with the charge in accordance with the scales of punishment.
- 2.4 If the person being charged does not wish to contest the charge, he shall have the right to make submissions in writing for leniency to the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, which will consider the same together with other relevant materials.
- 2.5 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall handle Cautions, Expulsions and other act(s) of misconduct in such meetings and at such times as determined prior to the start of a football season.
- 2.6 If a person being charged contests the charge in accordance with this Disciplinary Code, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall convene a hearing to handle the charge and the contest application (the "Contest Hearing").

- 2.7 Any person being charged who contests a charge must attend the Contest Hearing either in person or authorize another person to do so (whether or not he is summoned by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee) for the purpose of giving oral evidence (and other evidence), and be subject to the cross-examination conducted by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee and other relevant individuals. Absence at the Contest Hearing shall result in an automatic dismissal of the contest, and that the case shall be dealt with based on the referee's report with the contest deposit forfeited.
- 2.8 The referee and assistant referee(s) must make every effort to attend the Contest Hearing in order to assist the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee in dealing with the same. However, if there is a sufficient reason which render the said referee unable to attend the Contest Hearing and if, in his/her opinion, the assistant referee(s) is/are capable of answering all relevant questions, then at the discretion of the Chairman of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, the assistant referee(s) shall be permitted to act as a representative of the referee in attending the Contest Hearing. Any referee and/or assistant referee(s) who is/are due to attend a Contest Hearing but is/are unable to do so must notify the HKFA Secretariat at least 24 hours in advance of the Contest Hearing. In the absence of a referee [and/or the assistant referee(s)], the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall have the right not to handle the case as it deems fit. In relation to referee who fail(s) to attend a Contest Hearing without a sufficient reason, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee may refer the said referee to the Referees Committee.
- 2.9 The contest deposit in respect of this football season (2024/25) for a Player and/or Team Official in connection with the premier league is HK\$4,000.00, whereas the contest deposit in respect of this football season for other divisions is HK\$2,000.00. Separately, only a person who succeeds in his/her contest will have his contest deposit refunded, and in all other circumstances the contest deposit shall be forfeited.
- 2.10 In the event that a Player requests for a cancellation of his contest against a charge, he/she must inform HKFA in writing latest by 1 working day prior to the date scheduled for the hearing. Only one-half (1/2) of the contest deposit will be refunded for an application for cancellation of a contest against the charge.
- 2.11 No application for an adjournment of a Contest Hearing shall be entertained unless such application is supported by sufficient proof and reasonable explanation. Any such application for adjournment must be submitted to HKFA latest by 2 working days prior to the date scheduled for the Contest Hearing.
- 2.12 A Team Official and/or representative of a Club (other than the President, chairperson, Secretary, Game Supervisor and the Player(s) concerned) who intends to attend Contest Hearing will be permitted to do so only with the consent of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee if he/she is able to provide a formal authorization letter issued by the Club. No person shall be allowed to attend the Contest Hearing without the approval of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.

2.13 The Club, Player or the Team Official shall ensure that a representative would appear at HKFA so as to be made aware of the decision made by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee. In the absence of such representative, the decision in respect of an Expulsion and/or other acts of misconduct (except for cases involving Cautions only) will be communicated to the Club and the person being charged in writing. The Club can also make telephone inquiries with HKFA on the next working day with respect to the decision reached by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.

### **3. Hearing Procedures and Rights and Obligations of Person(s) attending contest hearings**

The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall conduct a Contest Hearing (not open to the public) in accordance with the following procedures:-

- 3.1 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall first summon the person being charged and all relevant individuals (including but not limited to any Player, Team Official, representative of any Club, referee, assistant referee(s), fourth official, Match Supervisor, and any other witness(es) (including staff members of HKFA Secretariat));
- 3.2 The chairman of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting shall present a brief summary of the incident(s) concerned;
- 3.3 The referee, assistant referee(s), fourth official, Match Supervisor and any other relevant individuals of HKFA shall give evidence relating to the offence, whether orally, in writing or in other forms;
- 3.4 The person being charged (and any other person(s) as permitted by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee to attend the Contest Hearing) shall give evidence relating to the offence, whether orally, in writing or in other forms;
- 3.5 Members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee who attend the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting shall have the right to ask any person who attends the said Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting any question, and the said person being asked of any such question must answer the same accordingly;
- 3.6 When all of the persons who attend the Contest Hearing have finished giving evidence, all of such other persons who attend the said Contest Hearing shall have the right to ask question(s) upon seeking the approval of the chairperson of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting;
- 3.7 The chairman of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting shall have the right to intervene and stop any submission and/or question being asked;
- 3.8 Upon the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee completing the Contest Hearing, all persons attending the said Contest Hearing must excuse themselves from such attendance (except for members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee) for such duration so that members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee can immediately conduct a private and confidential discussion and consideration of the offence involved;

- 3.9 The person being charged must wait for the decision to be made by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee;
- 3.10.1 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall, upon a consideration of all relevant matters, make a decision in respect of the person being charged on the same day on which the Hearing is held (or on another date as decided by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee), as well as provide a brief summary of the reason(s) for the decision;
- 3.10.2 In the event of an appeal lodged by the person being charged in respect of the decision rendered to him, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall make available the decision and reason(s) for such decision in writing prior to a hearing scheduled to handle the appeal (the “Appeal Hearing”);
- 3.10.3 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall make its decision and provide the reason(s) for such decision to the person being charged 48 hours prior to the Appeal Hearing, who is entitled to make a written request to the Appeal Committee for cancellation of his/her application for appeal 24 hours prior to the Appeal Hearing, and all of such fees paid by him in his/her application for appeal shall be refunded in full to him.
- 3.11 All persons attending a Contest Hearing must do so in good time and appear at the relevant venue punctually. All of such persons must act in a courteous manner and dress in modest attire. No hats and sunglasses are allowed. All mobile telephones and other communication devices must be switched off and not be used within the relevant venue for conducting the Contest Hearing. No questioning, submission, entry into and/or departure from the said venue may be allowed without the approval of the chairperson of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting, nor any form of communications, audio and/or video recording shall be allowed without such approval. No bawling, foul language (and/or other forms of language and/or conduct intending to disrupt the Contest Hearing and/or cause disturbances to any person attending the same) shall be allowed. The chairperson of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting shall have an absolute power to expel any person(s) in breach of the above (and/or refuse his/her entry into the venue conducting the Contest Hearing);
- 3.12 The Contest Hearing shall be conducted in Chinese (Cantonese) and in English if necessary. All relevant documentation shall also be completed in Chinese or English. Any person attending the Contest Hearing who is not familiar with the aforesaid languages shall arrange for a personal translator, who shall attend the Contest Hearing to provide translation services to all persons attending the same.

#### **4. Guidelines in handling a contest**

The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall refer to and adopt the following guidelines as the basis for handling an application to contest a charge lodged by a Club, Team Official and/or Player.

##### 4.1 In handling a contest:

4.1.1 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall adopt the standard of proof as it deems appropriate to do so;

4.1.2 In the event that several Players and/or Team Officials of Club(s) are involved in acts of serious misconduct and/or acts that bring the relevant Club(s) into disrepute (e.g. group assault) and that the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee is unable to confirm the identities of the individuals involved, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall have the authority to impose sanctions on the relevant Club(s).

4.2 If the finding of the relevant report is not rectified or that the sanction imposed has not been replaced with a more lenient sanction, the contest shall automatically be treated as having failed and the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall consider whether or not to forfeit the contest deposit. On the contrary, if the relevant report is rectified or that a more lenient sanction is imposed, the contest shall be treated as having succeeded.

4.3 In the event that the relevant report is rectified, members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall still have the authority to decide whether or not the person being charged is guilty of any other offence(s) (whether in the nature of a lesser charge or not). The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall impose an appropriate sanction in respect of such other charge(s) and, if not, the contest deposit shall be refunded in full.

4.4 All matters discussed in a Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting (including the decision(s) made in a Contest Hearing) shall be determined by simple majority amongst members of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee who attend the Contest Hearing. In the event that the number of votes in support and in opposition of a particular matter is the same, the chairman of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting shall have the right to cast a decisive vote.

## **Chapter 4: Scales of Punishment**

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### **1. Scales for Cautions**

- 1.1 A Player who has accumulated 5 Cautions shall automatically be suspended for the next upcoming Match.
- 1.2 Cautions given in the premier league and reserve division shall be calculated separately. In addition, a Player who has accumulated 5 Cautions in the same division and in the same football season for a second time shall automatically be suspended for the next 2 upcoming Matches, and for the next 3 upcoming Matches for the third time, so on and so forth.
- 1.3 A Team Official who has accumulated 3 Cautions shall automatically be suspended for the next upcoming Match.
- 1.4 Cautions given in the premier league and reserve division shall be calculated separately. In addition, a Team Official who has accumulated 3 Cautions in the same division and in the same football season for a second time shall automatically be suspended for the next 2 upcoming Matches, and for the next 3 upcoming Matches for the third time, so on and so forth.
- 1.5 A Club bears the obligation to execute a suspension relating to its Player(s)/Team Official(s) and may face sanction(s) if it fails to do so.

## 2. Scales for Expulsions

2.1 If a Player is sent off if he/she commits any of the following offences or misconduct, the minimum sanction shall be a suspension of the following number of Match(es) (inclusive of a minimum 1-Match suspension):-

<b>Serious Infringements and Misconduct</b>	<b>Number of Match(es) to be suspended</b>
1. Serious Foul Play - A tackling or challenge that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality. - Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for a ball from the front, from the side or from behind using one or both legs, with excessive force or endangers the safety of an opponent.	Minimum 2-Match suspension
2. Violent Conduct - When a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a team-mate, team official, match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made. - A player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.	Minimum 3-Match suspension
3. Biting or spitting at someone	Minimum 6-Match suspension
4. Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (except a goalkeeper within his/her penalty area)	Minimum 1-Match suspension
5. Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick	Minimum 1-Match suspension
6. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and / or gestures	Minimum 3-Match suspension
7. Receiving a second Caution in the same match	Minimum 1-Match suspension
8. Entering the Video Operation Room (VOR)	Minimum 3-Match suspension

2.2 In dealing with cases for sent off of Players who have committed the above offences (save for item number 7), the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall make its decision by considering the Standard Scales of Punishment (as detailed in Article 9 below) and having regard to Prior Offences (as detailed in Article 10 below).

2.3 If a Team Official is sent off if he/she commits any of the following offences or misconduct, the minimum sanction shall be a suspension of the following number of Match(es) (inclusive of a minimum 1-Match suspension):-

<b>Serious Infringements and Misconduct</b>	<b>Number of Match(es) to be suspended</b>
1. Receiving a second Caution in the same Match	Minimum 1-Match suspension
2. Directly Sent-off	Minimum 2-Match suspension

If a Team Official commits any other misconduct at the same time, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee has the right to make its decision for additional punishment.

### 3. Scales for Misconduct involving Players and Team Officials

3.1 If any Player, Team Official or Club has committed any of the following acts of misconduct, the minimum sanction shall be a suspension of the following number of Match(es), for such duration and for such amount of fine as prescribed below:-

Act(s) of Misconduct	Number of Match(es) / Duration to be suspended / Amount of Fine
1. Threatening a match official (including referees, duty officer, committee member, staff member of HKFA and any other person(s) who hold(s) a job title with HKFA), whether verbally or by conduct	Minimum 5-Match suspension and a minimum fine of HK\$40,000.00
2. Threatening an opponent Player and/or Team Official, whether verbally or by conduct	Minimum 2-Match suspension
3. Assaulting a match official (including referees, duty officer, committee member, staff member of HKFA and any other person(s) who hold(s) a job title with HKFA)	Minimum 10-Match suspension and/or 6 months to life suspension
4. Attempting to assault a match official (including referees, duty officer, committee member, staff member of HKFA and any other person(s) who hold(s) a job title with HKFA) or demonstrating any act of serious misconduct (for example, by throwing objects to a match official)	Minimum 5-Match suspension
5. Confronting with a match official (including but not limited to minor bodily contact or act(s) of shoving)	Minimum 3-Match suspension
6. Spitting at a match official	Minimum 12 months
7. Demonstrating any act of provocation towards a match official, whether verbally or by conduct	Minimum 2-Match suspension
8. Demonstrating any act of provocation towards an opponent Player or Team Official, whether verbally or by conduct	Minimum 1-Match suspension
9. Demonstrating any act of provocation towards the public, whether verbally or by conduct	Minimum 2-Match suspension
10. Refusing to leave the field of play when being ordered to do so	Minimum 2-Match suspension
11. Refusing to provide his/her name to a referee, or providing an inaccurate name to a referee	Minimum 1-Match suspension
12. Causing disturbances within the field of play	Minimum 1-Match suspension
13. Entering into the field of play without being allowed to do so	Minimum 2-Match suspension
14. Entering into the changing room of the referee(s) without being allowed to do so	Minimum 3-Match suspension
15. Refusing to play a Match or to continue playing a Match (if it results in the suspension of a Match, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall handle the same separately)	Minimum 3-Match suspension
16. Staff Member or player harassing or insulting a referee with abusive language either during or after a Match	Minimum 3-Match suspension
17. Brawling	Minimum 2-Match suspension
18. Demonstrating act(s) of unsporting conduct	Minimum 1-Match suspension
19. Showing underclothing with an advertisement printed on it	Minimum 2-Match suspension
20. Showing underclothing, accessories, tools, equipment or objects which has an insulting, provocative, political, religious slogan or declaration, or any such slogan or declaration that is considered to be inappropriate	Minimum 5-Match suspension
21. Demonstrating unsporting conduct which affects or has an intent to affect the result of a Match	Minimum 1 year to life suspension
22. Demonstrating an act which damages the image of football Match(es)	Minimum 3 months
23. Committing any offence or act of misconduct set out in item 1 to 6 of Article 2.1 above (Scales for Expulsions), regardless of whether or not an Expulsion has been issued by a referee	The number of Match(es) as indicated in item 1 to 6 of Article 2.1 above (Scales for Sent-offs)



24. Committing any offence or act of misconduct that damages the reputation of the event (including but not limited to making any threats, abusive, obscene, or insulting remarks about the event, officials, other teams, or personnel of the football association in any manner, as well as other inappropriate behavior).	Minimum 3-Match suspension
25. Other acts of misconduct	Minimum 1-Match suspension
26. Making inappropriate remarks or content that damages the reputation of participants in the competition, including but not limited to making threats, abusive, obscene, or insulting remarks or content about the football association, referees, other teams, or personnel of the HKFA to the public or media in any manner, or inciting public hatred or violence as a result of such remarks.	Minimum 3-Match suspension
27. Deliberately receiving a yellow or red card with the intent of causing that player or official to be suspended for the next match or to achieve other purposes.	Minimum 1-Match suspension

3.2 In handling the commission of any offence(s) by any Player, Team Official or Club, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall make a decision by considering the Standard Scales of Punishment (as detailed in Article 8 below) and having regard to Prior Offences (as detailed in Article 9 below).

3.3 The offences and scales of punishment set out above are also applicable to Team Officials of the Clubs.

3.4 Any Club sending an ineligible Player to participate in a Match shall be regarded as an act of misconduct, with sanctions to be imposed including but not limited to any of the following:

3.4.1 A fine not less than HK\$10,000.00;

3.4.2 Adjudicating the Club to have lost the Match by 0-3, or if the goal difference at the end of the Match in question is greater than 0-3, the result on the pitch is upheld. For Futsal & Beach Soccer, adjudicating the Club to have lost the Match by 0-5, or if the goal difference at the end of the Match in question is greater than 0-5, the result on the pitch is upheld.

### 3.5 Team Misconduct:

3.5.1 In the same match, if the referee issues yellow or red cards to players and officials of the team six times or more (with two yellows resulting in one red counted as one red card), the team will be considered in violation of "Team Misconduct." The penalties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

3.5.1.1 Premier League matches: A fine of HKD \$1,000 for each yellow card and a fine of HKD \$10,000 for each red card.

3.5.1.2 Other league matches: A fine of HKD \$250 for each yellow card and a fine of HKD \$2,500 for each red card.

## **4. Scales of Punishment**

- 4.1 In determining the sanctions in respect of a person being charged, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall make its decision by considering the Scales of Punishment set out in this Disciplinary Code (if applicable). The Scales of Punishment set out in this Disciplinary Code are minimum sanctions that may be imposed. Accordingly, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall reach its decision based on all relevant considerations (including the behavior of the person being charged in the course of conducting the investigation and/or the Contest Hearing as a result of the charge(s) made against him), and shall have the authority to impose more severe and/or other sanctions based on the following (including but not limited to a fine):
- 4.1.1 The degree of violence or recklessness in committing the offence. Unless the relevant sanction is already of the highest level, otherwise the maximum sanction that can be imposed is 3 times the minimum sanction.
  - 4.1.2 The malice and continuity of the offence, in particular in relation to offence committed against a referee and/or the assistant referee(s).
  - 4.1.3 The relevant record of the person being charged showing identical or similar offence(s) committed by him in the past 3 football seasons, as well as his/her overall disciplinary behaviour.
  - 4.1.4 The impact of the offence has on the public and the young generation, whether the offence has brought football into disrepute, and the impact that the offence has on the overall interests of football.
  - 4.1.5 If a Team Official commits an offence as set out in Article 3.1, his/her sanction shall be increased.
  - 4.1.6 If the offence committed by a Player, Team Official or a Club has caused a Match to be suspended, the relevant sanction shall also be increased.
- 4.2 If the offence committed by a person being charged (including a Player, Team Official, Club, or any other applicable individuals) is not set out in the Scales of Punishment, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall have the authority to impose the appropriate sanction(s) based on the gravity of the offence committed (including the imposition of a fine).

A suspended sanction shall be imposed only in circumstances which would be beneficial to the overall interests of football and hence shall be imposed in very exceptional circumstances. If a suspended sanction is imposed on a person being charged, he/she shall still be found guilty of the offence(s) being charged and, accordingly, the minimum sanction of the offence(s) shall only be imposed in very exceptional circumstances, for example, that a decision made by a referee is arguable.

## **5. Effective date of Suspension**

- 5.1 If a Player/Team Official is expelled from a formal Match (including that caused by an accumulation of 2 Cautions), he/she must be automatically suspended for 1 Match i.e. the next upcoming formal Match. However, if there is no Match between the date on which the Player makes an application to contest his/her expulsion (excluding an expulsion resulted from an accumulation of 2 Cautions) and the date on which the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee handles the said contest, and, that the contest application before the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee is successful which results in the cancellation of that expulsion, the said Player shall not be required to be suspended.
  
- 5.2 The decision made by Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall take effect immediately. Meanwhile, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall handle Expulsions in accordance with the dates as prescribed prior to the commencement of a football season. Upon decisions made by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, the relevant suspension shall be enforced at 12:00 noon on the next immediate day following the date on which the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee has made its decision.

## 6. Suspension of a Player

Any player with expulsion or suspension is restricted on the access of specific areas of the match venue:

### 6.1 Paid Matches:

Venue / Events	Player	
	Expulsion	Suspension
Field of Play	Ordered to leave and not allowed to re-entry to the field of play and its surroundings unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match*	Banned from the field of play and its surroundings unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match
Team Bench	Ordered to leave and not allowed to re-entry to the team bench unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match	Banned from the team bench unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match
Technical Area	Ordered to leave and not allowed to re-entry to the technical area unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match	Banned from the technical area unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match
Dressing Room	Shall stay in dressing room, or stay in doping control room until 75 <sup>th</sup> minute if doping test is examined, otherwise the player is allowed to stay in the dressing room	Banned from the dressing room and the assess control area which is nearby the dressing room at any time before and during the match (can join after the final whistle)
Stands	Shall stay in doping control room until 75 <sup>th</sup> minute if doping test is examined, otherwise the player is allowed to stay in the stands, provided that integrity and security are safeguard	Allowed to sit in the stands, provided that integrity and security are safeguard
Award ceremony(*)	Allowed to re-entry to the field of play to take part in the award ceremony (after the final whistle)	Allowed to entry to the field of play to take part in the award ceremony (after the final whistle)
Press Conferences	Not allowed to attend or participate in any match-related press conference	Banned from all match-related press conferences
Doping Control Room	Eligible for doping control and shall stay until 75 <sup>th</sup> minute	N/A
VIP Tribune	Not allowed in the VIP tribune	Can sit in the VIP or VVIP area, provided that integrity and security are safeguard

### 6.2 Free Matches:

A Player who is suspended shall be banned from entering into the venue for holding the Match (including the field of play or the substitutes' bench) within 1 hour preceding to the commencement of the Match and within 1 hour after the completion of that Match. A Player who is suspended or expelled is allowed to access to the field of play (after the final whistle) for the purpose of participate in the award ceremony.

## 7. Suspension of a Team Official

### 7.1 Paid Matches:

#### 7.1.1 General Suspension

Any Team Official with expulsion or suspension is restricted on the access of specific areas of the match venue:

Venue / Events	Official	
	Expulsion	Suspension
Field of Play	Ordered to leave and not allowed to re-entry to the field of play and its surroundings unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match	Banned from the field of play and its surroundings unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match
Team Bench	Ordered to leave and not allowed to re-entry to the team bench unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match	Banned from the team bench unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match
Technical Area	Ordered to leave and not allowed to re-entry to the technical area unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match	Banned from the technical area unless award ceremony* will be held right after the match
Dressing Room	Banned from entering the team dressing rooms (can join after the final whistle)	Banned from the team dressing rooms and the assess control area which is nearby the dressing room at any time before and during the match (can join after the final whistle)
Stands	Allowed to sit in the stands, provided that integrity and security are safeguard	Allowed to sit in the stands, provided that integrity and security are safeguard
Award ceremony(*)	Allowed to re-entry to the field of play to take part in the award ceremony (after the final whistle)	Allowed to entry to the field of play to take part in the award ceremony (after the final whistle)
Press Conferences	Not allowed to attend or participate in any match-related press conference	Banned from all match-related press conferences
VIP Tribune	Not allowed in the VIP tribune	Can sit in the VIP or VVIP area, provided that integrity and security are safeguard
Contact and Communication	May give instructions solely to the person replacing him on the team bench, providing such instructions do not disturb the spectators or disrupt the flow of play	Not permitted to communicate with his/her team using electronic or any other means for the duration of the match, and the official shall also be banned from participating in any coaching work and/or task(s).

#### 7.1.2 Suspension banning entry into a stadium for holding a Match

During the course of the Match in which the Team Official is suspended, he shall be banned from entered into the stadium for holding that Match (including any and all area of the field of play) at any time on the day on which the Match is conducted, and he/she shall also be banned from participating in any coaching work and/or task(s).

7.2 Free Matches:

A Team Official who is suspended shall be banned from entering into the venue for holding the Match (including the field of play, Technical Area or the substitutes' bench) within 1 hour preceding to the commencement of the Match and within 1 hour after the completion of that Match, and he/she shall also be banned from participating in any coaching work and/or task(s). Team Official who is suspended or expelled is allowed to access to the field of play (after the final whistle) for the purpose of participate in the award ceremony.

**8. Player and Team Official with life suspension**

A Player and/or Team Official who has been imposed with a sanction of life suspension shall be banned from participating in any formal Match as well as any football activity organized and/or co-organized by HKFA (for example, the curtain raiser). He/She shall also be banned from taking on any post with HKFA or any of its sponsored members.

**9. Standard Scales of Punishment**

- 9.1 Suspension in relation to the premier league (including league and cup Matches) shall only be calculated and executed in Matches held in the premier league. However, unless a Player has served the suspension in the premier league, he shall be banned from participating in any competition in the reserve division.
- 9.2 Suspension in any reserve division (including league and cup Matches) shall only be calculated and executed in Matches in the reserve division, and any Player in the premier league shall be entitled to participate in Matches held in the premier league even if and when he/she has not served the suspension in the reserve division.
- 9.3 A Player who participate in premier league and has been suspended not exceeding 10 Matches shall comply with and serve the said suspension before his/her application for a transfer to a Club participating in the first, second or third division can be processed. He/She can make a fine (in the sum of **HK\$10,000.00** per Match) to substitute for the Match(es) that he/she is suspended.
- 9.4 A Player in the first, second or third division who has been suspended for a designated number of Match(es) shall not be required to comply with and have the said suspension served if he/she applies for a transfer to premier league. However, the records relating to the said suspension shall be retained until the completion of the next football season, or that the said suspension shall be cancelled if he/she ceases to be registered as a Player in the first, second or third division.
- 9.5 A Player/Team Official who has been suspended for a particular Match but which Match was suspended or cancelled (not including the application for rescheduled matches) shall be considered as having served his/her suspension, provided that there is no arrangements for that Match to be re-played.

If not, the said Player/Team Official shall still be required to serve his suspension when the Match is re-played. However, if the said Player/Team Official have been removed from the team list when the Match is re-played, it shall be considered as having served his/her suspension.

- 9.6 In relation to a Player/Team Official suspended for a designated period of time, his/her suspension shall still stand and remain effective even if he/she is not registered with HKFA. However, a suspension shall be cancelled if the suspension concerns a few Matches and the relevant Player/Team Official remains to be unregistered within the entire football season.
- 9.7 A Player/Team Official who has been suspended in a local Match organized by HKFA shall only be required to serve his/her suspension in a relevant local Match. He/She shall be entitled to participate in any other international football activities (including participating in national team competition(s)) unless the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee determines otherwise.
- 9.8 In a Match that is not played in full and is abandoned, any Caution, Expulsion or other act(s) of misconduct shall be handled by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee according to the prescribed rules.
- 9.9 If a Team Official or Player has been suspended by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee for 1 Match for having committed an act of misconduct after a Match with no obvious intention to do so, his/her Club shall be entitled to pay a fine in the sum of **HK\$10,000.00** to substitute for the said suspension. Notwithstanding this, however, all post-Match reports on act(s) of misconduct must first be considered by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee and be determined accordingly.
- 9.10 All Players who are registered to participate and compete in the premier league and who has been suspended by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee not exceeding 10 premier league Matches for 1 offence shall be entitled to pay a fine (in the sum of **HK\$10,000.00** per Match) to substitute for **one-third (1/3)** of the suspended Matches. The suspended Players shall only be entitled to choose whether to serve the suspension in full or pay a fine at a maximum sum as substitution of **one-third (1/3)** of the suspended Matches. For the avoidance of doubt, Players are entitled to consider the following (a) and (b) options:

**\*No fines will be accepted as a substitute for suspensions carried over to the 2025-26 season or thereafter.**

<b>Number of Match(es) suspended as decided by the Disciplinary &amp; Ethics Committee for a particular offence</b>	<b>Option (a) i.e. serving suspension in full</b>	<b>Option (b) i.e. paying a fine to substitute for part of the suspended Matches</b>
1 Match	Suspended for 1 Match	Not applicable
2 Matches	Suspended for 2 Matches	Not applicable
3 Matches	Suspended for 3 Matches	Suspended for 2 Matches and a fine of HK\$10,000.00
4 Matches	Suspended for 4 Matches	Suspended for 3 Matches and a fine of HK\$10,000.00
5 Matches	Suspended for 5 Matches	Suspended for 4 Matches and a fine of HK\$10,000.00
6 Matches	Suspended for 6 Matches	Suspended for 4 Matches and a fine of HK\$20,000.00
7 Matches	Suspended for 7 Matches	Suspended for 5 Matches and a fine of HK\$20,000.00
8 Matches	Suspended for 8 Matches	Suspended for 6 Matches and a fine of HK\$20,000.00
9 Matches	Suspended for 9 Matches	Suspended for 6 Matches and a fine of HK\$30,000.00
10 Matches	Suspended for 10 Matches	Suspended for 7 Matches and a fine of HK\$30,000.00
More than 10 Matches	To be decided by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee on a case-by-case basis	

- 9.11 A Player suspended in the premier league must, within 72 hours from which suspension takes effect, submit a fine to the HKFA together with a response, informing HKFA clearly as to the number of Matches substituted by payment of the said fine as indicated in option (b) of the Article set out in the above. If HKFA receives no such response from the suspended Player within the said 72 hours, he/she shall be considered as having accepted option (a) of the Article set out in the above and to serve his/her suspension in full.

## **10. References to past offences**

### **10.1 References to records for the past 3 football seasons**

If a Player/Team Official is directly expelled as a result of a red card or any act of misconduct, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall refer to his/her disciplinary records for the **past 5 football seasons (2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24)** and decide on the appropriate sanction(s) accordingly.

### **10.2 Sanction for Commission of an Offence of Expulsion caused by a red card**

Aggravation / Mitigation of sanction

- In relation to a Player/Team Official being expelled for an offence caused by a red card or other act(s) of misconduct in the same football season, the sanction imposed on the repeated offence shall be doubled in comparison to the preceding offence.
- Any evidence presented to the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee for the purpose of mitigation shall be thoroughly considered by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, which may alter/amend the sanction as it deems fit.



## **11. Scales of Punishment for Friendly Matches**

### **11.1 Generally**

- 10.1.1 The Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall reserve its right to take any appropriate action if it is of the view that an offence and/or act of misconduct is likely to bring football into disrepute.
- 10.1.2 In relation to an offence and/or act of misconduct which occurs in a friendly Match officiated by referees as appointed by HKFA within a football season, such offence and/or act of misconduct shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee. The sanction for any Caution, Expulsion or other act(s) of misconduct in these Matches shall be imposed in the form of a fine on the relevant Player, Team Official and/or the Club concerned. If the Player on loan is involved in any of these offences, the relevant fine shall be imposed on the Club that has borrowed the said Player on loan.

## **12. Disciplinary Scales of Punishment applicable to Clubs and their Team Officials**

Unless stated otherwise by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee or in this Disciplinary Code or in the Laws of the Game, all of the Scales of Punishment as set out in this Disciplinary Code shall be applicable to Clubs and their Team Officials.

## **13. Fine**

In accordance with the Articles of Association of HKFA, the Rules and Competition Rules, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall have the authority to impose a fine on the relevant Club and/or football team for Expulsions, serious offences other than Expulsions and other acts of misconduct. The amount of such fine shall not exceed **HK\$500,000.00** in respect of a Club registered in the premier league and shall not exceed **HK\$50,000.00** in respect of a Club registered in the reserve division, the first division, second division or the third division.

In addition, the relevant fine shall be payable within 14 working days from the date on which the sanction is imposed. If the relevant Club and/or football team has failed to pay the said fine within such time limit, the HKFA Secretariat shall transfer the matter to the Board of Directors for their further handling.

## **14. Anti-Doping Regulations**

Doping is strictly prohibited and all participating clubs, its officials and players undertake to refrain from doping as defined by the relevant regulations, circulars and directives of FIFA (The Fédération Internationale de Football Association) / AFC (Asian Football Confederation) / WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency) / HKADC (Hong Kong Anti-Doping Committee) / HKFA (Hong Kong Football Association) as well as to accept the same.

Any club, official or player found guilty of breaching the relevant regulations, circulars and directives shall be deemed to have committed gross misconduct and shall be referred to the HKFA Disciplinary and/or appropriate body for such action as deem fit.

## **15. Offensive and Discriminatory Behaviour**

15.1 Anyone who insults someone in any way, especially by using offensive gestures or language, or who violates the principles of fair play or whose behavior is unsporting in any other way may be subject to sanctions in accordance with FIFA Disciplinary Code art. 13.

### **15.2 Discrimination**

15.2.1 Any person who offends the dignity or integrity of a country, a person or group of people through contemptuous, discriminatory or derogatory words or actions (by any means whatsoever) on account of race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, language, religion, political opinion, wealth, birth or any other status or any other reason, shall be sanctioned with a suspension lasting at least ten matches or a specific period, or any other appropriate disciplinary measure.

15.2.2 Where several persons (officials and/or players) from the same club or association simultaneously breach Article 15.2.1 or there are other aggravating circumstances, the team concerned may be deducted three points for a first offence and six points for a second offence; a further offence may result in relegation to a lower division. In the case of matches in which no points are awarded, the team may be disqualified from the competition.

## Chapter 5: Other Matters

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### 1. Match Supervisor

#### 1.1 Eligibility and Registration

- 1.1.1 Prior to the commencement of a football season, each and every Club must register with HKFA at most 7 Team Officials who each has attained 21 years of age at the time when they are so registered.
- 1.1.2 No person shall be permitted to register or act or seek to act as a Match Supervisor for any Club registered in the premier league if and when he/she is registered with HKFA as a Player in the premier league. Any Player in breach of such regulation shall be imposed with sanction(s) by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee as it deems fit.
- 1.1.3 As for a Player registered with HKFA (other than the premier league), he/she shall be registered as a Match Supervisor for his/her own team in each competition, provided he/she can only act in one of such capacities in a particular Match. He/She shall only register as Match Supervisor for one team in each competition.
- 1.1.4 Any Player who has been suspended by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall not be allowed to act as a Match Supervisor during his/her suspension.
- 1.1.5 Each official shall only register as Match Supervisor for one club in each competition.
- 1.1.6 During suspension, Team official who has registered as Match Supervisor in more than one competition/age group is allowed to represent the duties of Match Supervisor for other team(s) except in the suspended competition, unless the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee specified that the suspension needs to be served in other division(s) or competition(s).

#### 1.2 Duties of a Match Supervisor

- 1.2.1 At least 1 registered Match Supervisor must be in full attendance of the entire Match in which his/her Club plays. For the purpose of confirming such attendance, the Match Supervisor must identify him/herself to the referee and sign on the relevant form, i.e. Form B (Players' Registration Form) prior to the commencement of the Match, and sign on the related match documents after the match (including but not limited to the Record of Red and Yellow Card for the Match).
- 1.2.2 Upon signing on Form B, the Match Supervisor shall automatically be held responsible for all the matters of the team to which his/her Club belongs during the match. Such Game Supervisor shall be required to attend the whole Match, and cannot be replaced by any other Match Supervisor(s) at any given time during the Match.
- 1.2.3 The Match Supervisor shall cooperate with the referee and duty officer to control and supervise the conduct of the Team Officials and Players of his/her Club.
- 1.2.4 Upon a referee's request, the Match Supervisor shall assist the referee in settling any dispute(s) and/or act(s) of misconduct which occur(s) during a Match.

1.2.5 The Match Supervisor shall attend any meeting(s) convened by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee and/or other committees in the event that a charge is made against a Team Official or Player of his/her Club.

1.2.6 Notwithstanding Article 1.2.5, the Match Supervisor may be exempted from presence at the meeting(s) as referred to in Article 1.2.5 if he is able to provide satisfactory reason(s) to the relevant committee, provided that the Club must send another Team Official as its representative to attend the same meeting(s), who has witnessed the whole incident which forms the subject matter of the charge.

### 1.3 Sanctions for breach of duties and/or rules by Match Supervisors

1.3.1 The absence of a Match Supervisor in taking up his/her relevant duties may render the team to which his/her Club belongs not allowed to play in the Match.

1.3.2 Any affiliated Club failing to comply with the above regulations shall be regarded as having committed an act of misconduct, which may result in certain sanctions being imposed by HKFA after having heard an explanation given by the Match Supervisor.

## 2. Handling of Player's Suspensions carried over a football season

2.1 Only a Player registered in the premier league shall have the right to pay a fine to substitute for a suspension in the first division (2013/14 Season) that has been carried over a football season. As for a Player in any other division, all unexecuted suspensions must be carried over to the next football season for execution.

2.2 A suspension carried over a football season can be substituted by payment of a fine as follows (applicable to Players in the premier league):-

(i) If a Player has a 1-Match suspension that needs to be carried over to the next football season, a fine in the sum of **HK\$10,000.00** can be paid to substitute for the same.

(ii) If a Player has been served with a suspension of more than 1 Match that needs to be carried over to the next football season, a fine in the sum of **HK\$10,000.00** can be paid to substitute for the first Match, with a fine in the sum of **HK\$10,000.00** per each subsequent Match can be paid to substitute for at most **one-third** of the remaining Matches being suspended. **(Starting from the 2025-26 season or thereafter, fines will not be accepted as a substitute for suspensions.)**

(iii) A suspended Player must first pay the relevant fine and serve the remaining Matches which cannot be replaced by payment of a fine, before he shall become eligible to participate in the formal Match(es) in that particular football season.

2.3 In the event that a fine is paid to substitute for the suspension carried over a football season, the relevant application must be completed at least 48 hours before the Player is due to appear in his/her first formal Match.

- 2.4 The number of suspended Matches in the premier league being carried over to the next football season shall only be executed in the premier league. In other words, if a Player was previously registered in the premier league in the preceding football season and has then been registered as a Player with the first, the second or third in this current football season, he shall not be required to serve the suspension previously imposed on him in the premier league in the preceding football season. However, if such Player then re-registers himself in the premier league, he must first serve the suspension in the premier league in accordance with the procedures set out in Article 2.1 to 2.3 above.
- 2.5 The number of suspended Matches in the first, the second or third being carried over to the next football season shall only be executed in the first, second or third division. In other words, if a Player was previously registered in the first, second or third division and has then been registered as a Player in the premier league in this current football season, he shall not be required to serve the suspension previously imposed on him in the first, second or third division in the preceding football season. However, if such Player then re-registers himself in the first, second or third division, he/she must first serve the suspension in the first, second or third division.
- 2.6 All of the suspension which remains to be unexecuted in this football season in respect of youth Matches of all levels must be carried over to the next football season for execution purposes, and the relevant Player must serve the suspension in a Match of the highest level that he/she can possibly participate. The ranking of all levels of Matches shall be as follows:-

Men's Competitions:

Premier League → Reserve Division → First Division → Second Division → Third Division → Premier Youth League / Youth League

Women's Competitions:

Women League → Women's Youth League

A Player registered in the premier league shall have the option of paying a fine to substitute for a suspension for a youth game that has been carried over to the next football season, provided that the relevant application must be completed at least 48 hours before the Player is due to appear in his/her first formal Match in the premier league:-

- (i) Suspension for the first to fifth youth game: HK\$1,000.00 per game
- (ii) Suspension for the sixth to tenth youth game: HK\$2,000.00 per game
- (iii) Suspension exceeding 10 Matches: to be decided by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee as to whether or not a fine is acceptable to substitute for a suspension in youth Matches that has been carried over to the next football season

### **3. Handling of Player's Cautions carried over a football season**

- 3.1 If only 2 or fewer Cautions are accumulated by a Player upon the completion of the current football season, such Cautions shall be automatically cancelled.

- 3.2 If 3 or more Cautions are accumulated by a Player upon the completion of the current football season, the first 2 Cautions shall be cancelled with the remaining balance carried over to the next football season for execution purposes. If a fine is to be paid in substitution for such unexecuted Cautions, the amount shall be as follows:-

<u>Division</u>	<u>Amount of fine per Caution</u>
Premier league	HK\$600
Reserve division, First-Third division, Women league, Futsal league	HK\$160

- 3.3 If a fine is to be paid in substitution of a Caution carried over a football season, the relevant application must be completed 48 hours before the commencement of the first formal Match that the Player is due to participate in. **(Starting from the 2025-26 season or thereafter, fines will not be accepted as a substitute for Cautions.)**
- 3.4 Cautions accumulated upon the completion of the current football season in respect of youth competitions shall be automatically cancelled.

#### **4. Handling of Team Official's Suspension and Cautions carried over a football season**

- 4.1 If any suspension of a Team Official is not performed in the related competition at the end of this season, the suspension shall carry into the competition with the highest level that the team official is entitled to participate in the next season. Levels of competitions are provided below in the order from the highest to the lowest level:
- Men's Competition: Premier League→ Reserve Division→ First Division→  
Second Division→ Third Division→ Premier Youth  
League / Youth League
- Women's Competition: Women's League→ Women' Youth League
- 4.2 Cautions accumulated upon the completion of the current football season shall be automatically cancelled.

#### **5. Accumulation of penalty points by Clubs**

- 5.1 Any Club and/or team registered in the premier league which has accumulated a penalty exceeding 180 points shall, upon deducting 180 points, be fined for a sum of HK\$75.00 per remaining point, the calculation of which shall be as follows:
- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Cautions  | : 4 points  |
| Indirect Sent-off (having accumulated 2 Cautions)                   | : 8 points  |
| Direct Sent-off   | : 15 points |
| Other acts of misconduct (per act)                                  | : 15 points |
| A Match that cannot be played or has to be suspended (per incident) | : 24 points |
- 5.2 The sum total of all of the fines paid by all Clubs and/or teams registered in the premier league shall be distributed evenly amongst the HKFA and the Club(s) and/or team(s) that has/have won the Best Sportsmanship Award in the same football season.

- 5.3 If the penalty points accumulated by a Club and/or team registered in the first, second or third division in a football season do not exceed the designated total penalty points, a subsidy in the sum of HK\$3,000.00 shall be awarded by the HKFA, the calculation of which shall be as follows:

Caution	: 4 points
Indirect Sent-off (having accumulated 2 Cautions)	: 8 points
Direct Sent-off	: 15 points
Other acts of misconduct (per act)	: 15 points
A Match that cannot be played or has to be suspended (per incident)	: 24 points
Standard penalty points	: 6 points x the total number of Matches participated

Notwithstanding the above, however, a Club and/or team registered in the first, second or third division shall not be awarded the aforesaid subsidy under the following conditions:

- a. The football team has accumulated more than 3 expulsions caused by issuance of red cards in 1 football season;
  - b. The football team has committed an act of serious misconduct which has resulted in a Match not being able to be played, or that the Match has to be suspended;
  - c. The last and second last football teams in all categories.
- 5.4 The Best Sportsmanship Award in respect of all categories shall be recommended by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee to the Board of Directors of HKFA, based on the considerations as prioritized below:-
- a. The football team has not committed any act which has resulted in a Match not being to be played, that the Match has to be abandoned, and that it has not breached any main rules of the Match;
  - b. In the division to which it belongs for the same football season (excluding the premier league), the football team is the team that has received the least penalty points after deducting the standard penalty points from its total penalty points;
  - c. The football team that has received the least number of direct Sent-offs in respect of its Players;
  - d. The football team that has received the least number of indirect Sent-offs in respect of its Players.

## **6. Dispute Resolution between Clubs and Players**

- 6.1 In case of disputes arising between clubs and players, HKFA Secretariat will refer the case to HKFA Dispute Resolution Chamber, as required by FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer. The DRC shall adjudicate on any of the cases described under the regulations of FIFA. If there is reason to believe that a case raises a disciplinary issue, the DRC shall submit the file to the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee in accordance with the HKFA Disciplinary Code.

**7. Languages**

- 7.1 In the case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the English and Chinese texts of these Regulations, the Chinese text shall be authoritative.



## **Chapter 6: Appeal**

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### **1. Composition of Appeal Committee**

- 1.1 The Appeal Committee is one of the standing-committees of HKFA. All members of the Appeal Committee (including the chairman and vice-chairman of the Appeal Committee) shall be nominated by the Board of Directors of HKFA for a term of 2 years (calculated in accordance with a football season prescribed by HKFA).
- 1.2 The quorum of a meeting shall comprise of 3 appointed members of the Appeal Committee.
- 1.3 Members of the Appeal Committee shall not take up any actual posting with the HKFA and/or its any affiliated Club.
- 1.4 The chairman of the Appeal Committee shall be appointed mutually amongst its attending members.
- 1.5 The general secretary of HKFA or its appointed staff member shall act as the secretary in respect of the committee meetings relating to the Appeal Committee. The Appeal Committee shall also invite HKFA's Head of Refereeing to attend the Appeal Committee Meetings who, if absent, shall be replaced by a referees instructor so as to provide professional opinion on Laws of the Game.
- 1.6 If any of the members of the Appeal Committee has any relationship with the matter(s) that is/are yet to be handled or is/are the subject of the upcoming hearing, he/she must disclose the said relationship with the matter(s) (including any individual or Club) and has to seek the approval of the Appeal Committee, failing which the same shall be treated as misconduct and will be handled by the Board of Directors accordingly.

### **2. Appeal procedures and other matters**

A Player, Team Official or Club shall have the right to appeal (the "Appeal") against a decision made by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee in accordance with the following procedures:-

- 2.1 Any application for such Appeal must be made by notice in writing addressed to the HKFA Secretariat (together with an application fee in the sum of **HK\$8,000.00** per Appeal) within 2 working days from the date on which the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee's decision in question is made.
- 2.2 In all documentation submitted to the HKFA Secretariat as aforesaid (including the Appeal application form, the reason(s) in support of the Appeal, the relevant written statements, reports and explanatory letters), the required signatories must sign on the relevant documentation to confirm the same, failing which the HKFA Secretariat shall not accept the said documentation. In addition, any additional attachments must also be clearly specified in the said documentation

- 2.3 If the person being charged has not returned a complete application for contest, or that the HKFA Secretariat has failed to receive a complete application for contest, the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall regard the same as the relevant Club and/or Player and/or the person being charged having accepted the referee's report and not intending to contest the charge. The Committee shall then deal with the charge in accordance with the scales of punishment. In the above situation, if a Player, Team Official or Club submit an Appeal application against the decision of the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee, the defendant can only appeal the sentence of the relevant decision.
- 2.4 Within 5 working days from the date on which the HKFA Secretariat receives an application for Appeal, the HKFA Secretariat shall fix a date for the Appeal Committee to convene a meeting to handle the said application.
- 2.5 The Appeal Committee shall handle the Appeal cases concerning the relevant Player(s), Team Official(s) and/or Club(s) independently.
- 2.6 The Appeal Committee must reach its decision based on the Articles of Association of the HKFA, the Competition Rules and any other relevant rules and regulations.
- 2.7 During the course of handling an Appeal application, all the decision made by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee shall remain effective unless and until the Appeal Committee decides otherwise.
- 2.8 Upon making a decision, the Appeal Committee shall submit its reason(s) for decision to the HKFA Secretariat as soon as practicable in which the Appeal Committee shall set out its decision and reason(s) in detail. Such reason(s) for decision shall also be provided to the relevant Club and the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee.
- 2.9 In the event that the Appeal Committee does not overturn the previous relevant decision or reduce the sanction imposed in respect of the subject act of misconduct, the said Appeal shall be considered as having failed and the application fee shall not be refunded. On the contrary, if the Appeal Committee overturns a previous relevant decision or reduces the sanction imposed in respect of the subject act of misconduct, the said appeal shall be considered as having succeeded and the application fee shall be refunded to the applicant.
- 2.10 The decision made by the Appeal Committee shall be the final decision.

## Appendix

### Meetings held by the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee and the relevant information for the football season 2023/24

<b>Number of meetings</b>	<b>Date of Meetings</b>	<b>Cautions and/or Sent-offs handled in the meetings</b>
<b>1</b>	16/09/2024	01/09/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>2</b>	30/09/2024	15/09/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>3</b>	14/10/2024	29/09/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>4</b>	28/10/2024	13/10/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>5</b>	11/11/2024	27/10/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>6</b>	25/11/2024	10/11/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>7</b>	09/12/2024	24/11/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>8</b>	23/12/2024	08/12/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>9</b>	06/01/2025	22/12/2024 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>10</b>	20/01/2025	05/01/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>11</b>	03/02/2025	19/01/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>12</b>	17/02/2025	02/02/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>13</b>	03/03/2025	16/02/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>14</b>	17/03/2025	02/03/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>15</b>	31/03/2025	16/03/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>16</b>	14/04/2025	30/03/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>17</b>	28/04/2025	13/04/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>18</b>	12/05/2025	27/04/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>19</b>	26/05/2025	11/05/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>20</b>	09/06/2025	25/05/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>21</b>	23/06/2025	08/06/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>22</b>	07/07/2025	22/06/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date
<b>23</b>	21/07/2025	06/07/2025 and the Match(es) held prior to this date

#### **Remarks: -**

- If a Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting needs to be rescheduled, the HKFA Secretariat shall inform the relevant attendees 72 hours before the time scheduled for the said meeting.
- In addition, if a black rainstorm warning, typhoon signal number 8 or above is hoisted by the Hong Kong Observatory on the day on which the Disciplinary & Ethics Committee is scheduled to hold a meeting, the said meeting shall be postponed and be held on the next immediate Wednesday.
- A Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meeting shall be held at 5:30 p.m. on the date on which it is scheduled.
- Generally speaking, Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meetings are held on Mondays. Unless Monday is a public holiday, and thus the relevant meetings shall be postponed to the next immediate Tuesday or Wednesday.
- Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meetings are generally held by way of circulation unless there are other special circumstances that justify a departure from such circulation, or that a hearing is required to be held.
- If required, Disciplinary & Ethics Committee Meetings may be added apart from the abovementioned dates to handle remaining disciplinary cases of the season.