



# Napier City Rovers Harassment-Free Policy

The objective of a harassment-free football policy is to provide a safer environment for all players, coaches, officials, club member and spectators to participate in.

There are many legal and ethical reasons as to why Napier City Rovers needs to ensure their community are not discriminated against. Often harassment and discrimination go unnoticed, or people have become conditioned to them so they become part of the social and cultural norms of the sport. There are specific behaviours which may be considered offensive by the recipient, hence constitute harassment or discrimination and in some instances these may be against the law.

**In line with our Code of Conduct Napier City Rovers will not tolerate harassment in any form and will take any complaint seriously and investigate it thoroughly.**

## Definition:

- Harassment consists of offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at a person or group that may reasonably offend, humiliate or intimidate another, and interferes with a person's right to coach, play, officiate or watch association football
- Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the abuse of or the improper assumption of power and is aggravated by the abuse of authority by one person over another.
- Harassment can be based on the personal characteristics or physical appearance of a person or group (age, disability, ethnic or national origins, race or colour, sex) or on their beliefs, opinions or affiliations.
- Harassment can take different forms, including oral, written, physical or other non-verbal forms. The behaviours can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect. Such behaviours are considered harassment when they are repeated or of such a significant nature that they have a detrimental effect on the recipient's ability to engage in the sport.

## Responsibilities:

Napier City Rovers is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to prevent harassment in the sport and for ensuring that policy and procedures are well known throughout the organisation. This means Napier city Rovers will take all reasonable steps to ensure that everyone, including players, coaches, officials, club member and spectators understand:

- What harassment means
- That it is against the law
- That it will not be tolerated
- That complaints will be dealt with through identified procedures. These will provide both formal and informal mechanisms.

## Dealing with Harassment

If any Napier City Rovers player, coach, official, club member or spectator feels they are being harassed there are several courses of action available to them. They vary in degrees of formality, from self-help or informal options, to more formal approaches. These options are described below:

1. **Self-help:** This involves letting the offender know that the harassing behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. This may resolve the matter quickly and in a low-key manner. This can be done in a number of ways including:
  - Telling the person directly what behaviour is not liked and asking them to stop it;
  - Writing a letter on a "private and confidential" basis to the person identifying the behaviour and asking them to stop it;
  - Taking a support person / friend to tell the person that their behaviour must stop.



2. **Informal:** This involves getting someone to help resolve the situation. The initial Harassment Contact Person at Napier City Rovers is the Club's Chairman. The Chairman will talk to the complainant about what happened and what is required to fix the situation. They will then talk about the complaint to the person identified. If there is agreement on what happened and what will fix the situation, then the issue can be resolved confidentially between the immediate parties.
3. **Formal:** This involves writing a formal complaint to The Secretary, Napier City Rovers outlining:
  - Who the complaint is about;
  - What happened (including time, date, place, what was said and / or done, how often this had been said and / or done);
  - How it was responded to;
  - What impact the behaviour has had;
  - Whether anyone else witnessed the behaviour;
  - What is the desired outcome of the complaint;
  - Why, if the incident occurred more than one year ago, there has been a delay in lodging the complaint; and
  - Requesting confidentiality / approval before any action by Napier City Rovers

This complaint should be addressed to the Club's Secretary who will forward it to Napier City Rovers appointed Harassment Complaints Officer.

#### **Disciplinary Procedure:**

In-line with the Napier City Rovers/NZ Footballs Code of Conduct and this policy all complaints of harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. The investigation could result in disciplinary action that may involve a documented warning, suspension from Napier City Rovers limited timeframe ban or unlimited ban.

The investigation will involve the following:

- Explaining to the offender that a complaint has been received and ask for their version of events;
- Identifying any witnesses to the incident and documenting this evidence;
- Napier City Rovers Committee meeting to discuss all the evidence gathered and whether there is still information required to make a decision on the next step;
- Once the Committee have all the information and evidence they need to make a fair and reasonable decision, then they are to decide what disciplinary action if any will be taken.
- Both the offender and the complainant should be informed of the decision and the reason why the Committee came to this.

#### **Incident Process:**

All incidents must be documented and reviewed at the next appropriate Napier City Rovers Committee Meeting to ensure policy was adhered to and appropriate action was taken and recorded.

I, ..... have read, understand and accept Napier City Rovers Harassment-Free Policy set out in this document:

**Signature:**

**Date:**

*(Appropriate Club Representative) Signature:*