



BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

British Baseball Federation Complaints Procedure

The British Baseball Federation (BBF) is committed to resolving complaints and grievances. We will keep all complaints confidential and will only involve as many internal and external parties as necessary under our legal obligations. If you make a complaint, we will treat you with respect, and we expect you to treat our volunteers in the same way.

The British Baseball Federation recognises that a formal complaints and grievance procedure can be a stressful and upsetting experience for all parties involved. Everyone involved in the process is entitled to be treated calmly and with respect. Abusive or insulting behaviour will not be tolerated from anyone taking part in conducting the complaints & grievance procedures and any such behaviour will be treated as misconduct under the disciplinary procedure.

The Board expects you to refrain from making comments on social media and the public about your complaint while it is under review.

Complaints or grievances about serious criminal misconduct (criminal assault, hate crimes, sexual harassment, and other) should be reported directly to law enforcement.

You cannot formally complain or raise a grievance about our published policies, rules, insurance coverage, game protests, dissatisfied with an enforcement decision, or contractual disputes.

The British Baseball Federation reserves the right to seek outside advice to review your complaint or grievance. If your complaint or grievance is of a legal matter or carries a form of legal liability, we will advise our insurers accordingly.

1 Purpose

1.1 This procedure aims to:

- 1.1.1 help volunteers resolve their grievances internally.
- 1.1.2 enable external complaints to be addressed and resolved.
- 1.1.3 encourage prompt informal resolution.
- 1.1.4 create better awareness of rights and responsibilities in the organisation.
- 1.1.5 raise standards of dispute management and to help resolve problems as they arise.



2 Informal Complaint and Grievance Process

2.1 The British Baseball Federation believes that all volunteers and members of our community should be treated fairly and with respect. If an individual is unhappy about the treatment received or about any aspect of their volunteering or in any of their dealings with the Federation, this should, initially be raised without unreasonable delay with their appropriate designated contact or “manager” who will attempt to resolve the situation on an informal basis. If it is not possible to speak to the contact or “manager” directly, an individual can contact any member of the Board of the British Baseball Federation.

2.2 The purpose of the complaints and grievance procedure is to ensure that every individual has an opportunity to raise formally any grievances relating to the role, or complaints regarding the Federation, or any of its volunteers. The British Baseball Federation’s aim is to ensure that every grievance or complaint is dealt with promptly and fairly by the appropriate level of management.

3 Formal Complaint & Grievance Procedure

3.1 Sending of a Complaint or Grievance

3.1.1 If a complaint or grievance cannot be resolved informally, please formally submit your complaint or grievance via email to the Secretary (secretary@britishbaseball.org.uk) who will receive this on behalf of the Board with the subject line “Formal Complaint/Grievance”.

3.1.2 Written allegations should, so far as is possible, set out the allegation, the person(s) against whom the allegation is made, the exact reason that the allegation has been brought (i.e., the elements of any rules or regulations, that has or have been broken) and all supporting evidence and facts available to the complainant.

3.1.3 The British Baseball Federation will not consider a complaint or grievance which is made anonymously.

3.1.4 Complaints or grievances should be made within 30 days of the incident giving rise to your concern.

3.1.5 If the complaint or grievance being made is in relation to the Secretary of the Board, please refer your complaint to the President of the Federation (president@britishbaseball.org.uk).

3.1.6 If a group wishes to raise a complaint or grievance, an appropriate representative should raise the complaint or grievance on behalf of the group.

3.2 Stage One Investigation

3.2.1 The Secretary is, as soon as practicable after receiving a formal complaint or grievance to notify the Board and/or President as appropriate that it has been received and respond within seven (7) working days to the complainant.

3.2.2 The Secretary (or President in the event that the Secretary is the subject of the Complaint) is, when a written grievance and/or complaint is received, to investigate it or arrange for its investigation by a suitable person. A written report from this investigation will be produced identifying any evidence relevant to the allegation and giving an opinion whether or not there is a case to answer.

3.2.3 The Secretary may refer an allegation to the Board and/or President prior to the completion of an investigation report if it appears to the Secretary that a Disciplinary Committee is required or Interim measures or suspension under points **six (6)** or **seven (7)** of this procedure may need to be considered.

3.2.4 If the opinion of the person investigating the matter is that there is a case to answer, a written charge or charges are to be drawn up.



3.2.5 The Secretary is, ideally within fourteen (14) days of receiving a complaint or grievance, to notify the Board and/or President as appropriate that it has been investigated. The Secretary will then determine that either:

3.2.5.1 In the opinion of the person investigating there is no case to answer, no further action is required. A letter must be sent to the complainant within five (5) working days providing them with the determination of the investigation as well as the option for an appeal to be submitted against this judgement outlined in **3.3**. or

3.2.5.2 In the opinion of the person investigating there is a case to answer, a charge or charges have been drawn up and that the appointment of a Disciplinary Committee under the British Baseball Federation's Disciplinary Procedures is required. The person investigating will also send a letter to the subject of the complaint or grievance within three (3) working days of the notification of **3.2.4** above including a copy of the charge, any relevant evidence, outlining the possible outcomes of the disciplinary proceedings and informing them that the British Baseball Federation's Disciplinary procedures will be applied.

3.2.6 In some circumstances, the complaint or grievance may need to be investigated further. If the investigation is likely to take longer than fourteen (14) days, this will be confirmed to the complainant and will not void any complaints, grievances or investigations that are being conducted.

3.2.7 If the British Baseball Federation considers the complainant is acting out of insincere motives, it may disallow a request to proceed to the next state of the procedure and/or the complainant may be disciplined.

3.3 Stage Two Appeal

3.3.1 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage one (1) investigation conducted under **3.2**, they may appeal the decision in writing within five (5) further working days by means of a written notice of appeal sent to the Secretary. The correspondence should set out the grounds for the complaint or grievance and the reasons for the dissatisfaction with the original investigation and response.

3.3.2 Appeals will be acknowledged in writing within two (2) working days by the Secretary or appropriate recipient.

3.3.3 on the receipt of the appeal notice, the Secretary will arrange for its investigation by a suitable person other than the individual that conducted the original investigation as outlined in **3.2.2, 3.24 and 3.2.5**

4 Unreasonable Complaints or Grievances

4.1 From time to time some complaints are outside of our scope and you may become adamant to pursue it regardless if we followed our procedure or whether it is in our scope. If so, we reserve the right to discard future similar complaints or grievances.

5 Referral of complaints & grievances or of appeal to a third party by agreement

5.1 The British Baseball Federation reserves the right to refer a matter to the Sport Integrity Service under the Rules of Procedure of that service. This may involve the commission of an independent investigation or disciplinary procedure into alleged grievances, or allegations of misconduct involving: i) athletes; ii) athlete support personnel; or iii) British Baseball Federation office holders, who are either members of the British Baseball Federation World Class Programme; or funded through the UK Sport grant the following circumstances:

5.1.1 where an individual is deemed a 'Relevant Person' under the terms of the Independent Disclosure and Complaints Service Pilot Regulations; and

5.1.2 they are a respondent to allegations of misconduct as defined as a 'Relevant Matter' under the same regulations.

In such circumstances they are required to cooperate with any investigation conducted by



Sport Integrity, where the investigation is covered by terms of reference agreed by British Baseball Federation.

5.2 A complaint or grievance may, by written agreement between the British Baseball Federation and the subject of the allegation be referred to Sport Resolutions UK (a trading name of The Sports Dispute Resolution Panel Ltd - Company No. 3351039).

5.3 In the alternative an appeal may, by written agreement, be referred to Sport Resolutions UK (a trading name of The Sports Dispute Resolution Panel Ltd - Company No. 3351039) for final and binding arbitration.

5.4 Before the British Baseball Federation will agree to any such reference a suitable agreement must be in place to deal with costs of the reference. The British Baseball Federation will normally expect the costs to be shared equally between the British Baseball Federation and the subject of the allegation or the appellant and may require a deposit on account of costs to be paid in advance.

6 Interim Suspension and Other Measures (excluding Board Officials)

6.1 It may be appropriate to place the subject of the grievance or complaint on an interim suspension from their role as a volunteer or apply interim measures pending final determination of a charge and sanction by a Disciplinary Committee and if necessary, the pending decision on appeal. An interim suspension or other interim measure should only be imposed when the material available shows that it is necessary to do so in the interests of the British Baseball Federation and its membership or the protection of others. Alternatives to suspension will always be considered and the need for the suspension to be continued will be reviewed during the process as appropriate. An interim suspension does not amount to a disciplinary sanction and does not imply that any decision has already been made about the allegations.

6.2 The power to apply interim suspension and measures shall be determined by a majority vote of the Board of the British Baseball Federation and brought to the Board by the investigating individual(s).

6.3 The individual conducting the investigation outlined under 3.2 of this policy will not take part in any decision of the Board on interim suspension or measure on the subject of the complaint.

6.4 On the determination of any interim measure or suspension on the subject of the complaint or grievance, the investigating individual will write within two (2) days of the verdict to the subject of the complaint supplying the result of the vote, the appropriate interim measures or interim suspension notice, the option of appeal under 6.5 as well as any appropriate evidence that was used to determine the interim measures or suspension.

6.5 After determining any interim measure of suspension, the subject of the allegation will be given the opportunity to appeal the relevant action taken and given the opportunity to make submissions on the question of interim suspension or measures. Such submissions must be made in writing within five (5) working days.

6.6 The power to apply an interim suspension or interim measure will also be available to a disciplinary committee as outlined in the British Baseball Federation's Disciplinary Procedure.

7 Interim Suspension or Measures of Board Official from Board

7.1 The President may at any stage following notification that an allegation has been made against a Board Official, request the relevant Board Official to agree to step down temporarily from the Board while it is investigated and/ or any charge is dealt with.

7.2 The President may at any stage following notification that an allegation has been made against a Board Official refer the matter of interim suspension or measures of the Board Member to the remaining members of the British Baseball Federation Board for a decision.



7.3 The Board may by majority vote of the remaining members of the Board suspend or apply measures to the subject of an allegation from the Board on an interim basis.

7.4 The Secretary, or investigating individual if they are a Board Official, will not take part in any decision of the Board on interim suspension or measure on the subject of the complaint.

7.5 The Board must, before imposing the interim suspension or other measures on a Board Official, give the subject of the allegation an opportunity to make submissions to it on the question of interim suspension or measures themselves or through a representative unless to do so in advance of the proposed action would in the opinion of the majority of the Board, give rise to a serious risk of harm to any person or the interests of the British Baseball Federation, in which case it must review its decision as soon as practicable after making it and give the person concerned copies of the relevant material and an opportunity to make submissions challenging the action taken. Such submissions may be made in writing or in person or through a representative to the Board (at a face-to-face meeting or by conference call or video link as the Board may determine).

7.6 A Disciplinary Committee appointed to deal with a charge against a Board Official must, on initial reference of a charge to it (and may at any other time), consider whether it appears necessary that the Board Official temporarily step down or be suspended from the Board pending determination of the charge and, if it considers that it is necessary, make a recommendation to this effect to the President.



Complaints and Grievance Process – Flow Chart

