



# **Code of Conduct**

*for the*

## **Canberra District Rugby League Referees Association**

**Version 10**

**January 2022**

*Canberra District Rugby League Referees Association Inc.*  
*Code of Conduct*

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**1. Scope**

- 1.1 All members of the Canberra District Rugby League Referees' Association Inc. (the Association) shall be bound by this Code of Conduct and agree that by their continued membership of the Association, they accept the spirit and intent of this Code and agree to be bound by it.
- 1.2 The spirit and intent of this Code is to outline to all members what is expected from them with respect to their behaviour as referees and members of this Association.
- 1.3 The Code shall ensure that all members of the Association are able to enjoy their refereeing, training and Association social activities free from harassment and discrimination.
- 1.4 Members will be well aware of their obligations to their fellow members and the Association.

***Definitions***

In this Code of Conduct, unless the contrary intention appears the definitions have the same meaning as those in Part 1 of the Objects and Rules for the Canberra District Rugby League Referees Association Incorporated.

**2. Duties and Obligations of Referees**

- 2.1 All members will, to the best of their ability, fulfil any and all appointments given to them by the Canberra District Rugby League Referees Appointments Boards, or any other authorised officer of the Association.
- 2.2 All members are to be present at their appointed venue at a suitable time prior to the scheduled start time of their first appointment, in accordance with instructions issued by the Canberra District Rugby League Referees Appointments Boards.

- 2.3 In the event that a member of this Association is unable to complete an appointment that they have commenced due to illness or injury and no “stand-by” official is available, members of this Association should make themselves available to complete that appointment or as directed by the Director of Referees, Deputy Director of Referees or Advisory Board member present at the Ground as soon as possible.
- 2.4 Except where sub-section 2.3 applies, members shall not change appointments without the authorisation of the Director of Referees, Deputy Director of Referees, Executive Officer or Director, Operations.

### **3. Sponsorship**

- 3.1 No member shall enter into any form of personal sponsorship agreements that conflict with the Association’s current sponsors, unless previously authorised, in writing, by the Association Board.
- 3.2 Members shall advise the Association Board in writing immediately they enter into or are currently bound by any personal sponsorship agreements that relate to their refereeing activities.

### **4. Personal Conduct**

- 4.1 At all times, members are expected to act with the utmost integrity and act in a proper and professional manner, befitting their status as a Rugby League Referee and a member of this Association. As such, members shall not:
- 4.1.1 Use obscene or abusive language at any player, coach, club official, League official, Association member, another Referee, member of the media or member of the public;
- 4.1.2 Discriminate against any member or employee of this Association, player, coach, club official or member of the public based on their gender, race, colour, sexual preference, age, disability or religion;

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- 4.1.3 Harass (sexually or in any other manner), any member or employee of this Association, player, coach, club official or member of the public based on their gender, race, colour, sexual preference, age, disability or religion;
- 4.1.4 Make any form of inappropriate or unwanted contact (including, but not limited to verbal, physical or intimidatory actions) with any member or employee of this Association, player, coach, club official or member of the public;
- 4.1.5 Officiate whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- 4.1.6 Act in a dishonest or illegal manner;
- 4.1.7 Gamble on any rugby league fixture under the control of the Canberra District Rugby League with any betting agency, whether official or otherwise. The purchase of raffle tickets etc, from football clubs, or the purpose of fundraising is permissible;
- 4.1.8 Accept, or offer any form of inducement, to change or influence a referee's judgement or decisions. Members must immediately report any acceptances or offers of inducement to or by any Association members to the Association's Executive Officer;
- 4.1.9 Act in a manner that may cause harm, damage or embarrassment to the image or reputation of this Association;
- 4.1.10 Act in a manner that is likely to bring the game of Rugby League into disrepute;
- 4.1.11 Make vexatious, trivial or frivolous allegations to the Board regarding the actions of another member.
- 4.1.12 Use electronic media such as e-mail, and/or social media programs (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) to denigrate any person, club or organisation. This includes the use of or reply to any e-mail distribution list which can be regarded as offensive, obscene or derogatory in nature

**5. *Public or Media Comment***

- 5.1 No member shall make any comment to any media outlet or other outside party that is detrimental to the interests, welfare or image of this Association.
- 5.2 No member shall write an article or column relating to Rugby League or Refereeing for any media outlet, without first obtaining the consent of the Association Board.

**6. *Uniform and Dress Code***

- 6.1 Members shall at all times present themselves in a neat and tidy manner.
- 6.2 Members shall only officiate in matches wearing the current official Association on-field uniform that shall meet the following basic criteria:
  - 6.2.1 Uniforms shall be clean and tidy with socks pulled up and jumper tucked in;
  - 6.2.2 Tracksuits, if worn over match gear during appointments, shall only be those approved by the Association.
- 6.3 When arriving at, or departing from grounds in their capacity as a referee, members shall not wear apparel, carry gear bags or any other identifying logo relating to any NRL, NSWRL or CRRL Club.
- 6.4 Members must not wear excessive or dangerous jewellery whilst officiating in matches.
- 6.5 When acting in an official capacity as an active Referee, members shall only wear Association clothing, both on and off the field, which bears the logos and symbols of the Association and its current sponsors. No clothing bearing the logos and symbols of previous sponsors are to be worn when acting in any official capacity as an active Referee, unless approved by the Association.
- 6.6 Any graded members who officiate in local matches (at the request of their District Association) shall officiate in gear as stipulated by the Association.

- 6.7 All members must comply with reasonable directions of the Board.

**7. Official Inquiries**

- 7.1 Members shall not make any public comment in relation to any matter that may be subject of any official inquiry, judiciary hearing, police or civil matter unless authorised to do so.

**8. Breaches of this Code (Misconduct)**

- 8.1 Following receipt of an allegation under sub-rule 15 of the Association's Objects and Rules, regarding a possible breach of this Code, the Executive Officer shall within 48 hours inform members of the Board of the allegation.
- 8.2 (a) Upon advice of an allegation, the Board shall within fourteen days assess whether the allegation is a breach of the Code of Conduct or should be dismissed.
- (b) If the allegation is determined to be a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Board shall assess whether the allegation should be dealt with as a minor or major breach of Misconduct.
- 8.3 The Board may take such action as suspending the member from active refereeing duties as is necessary pending the outcome of the Misconduct Tribunal hearing and any subsequent Appeal process.
- 8.4 Where a conflict of interest may arise regarding a Board member, that Board member shall stand aside until the outcome of the inquiry is complete.
- 8.5 Should a situation arise where allegations are levelled at the Board, the allegation shall be referred to the Appeals Tribunal.
- 8.6 Minor Breach – Face to face discussion between at least two (2) Board members and the member for alleged minor breaches of the Code of Conduct.

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- This process will explain to the member their unacceptable action/s or behaviour/s.
- Ensure the member fully understands their unacceptable action/s or behaviour/s.
- Assist the member to mutually agree on a course of action to resolve the unacceptable action/s or behaviour/s.
- Set a review period, if required.
- Monitor the remedial action, if required.
- Provide written information to the member on the action to be taken.
- Provide a summary of those actions to be undertaken and this summary to be recorded in the Disciplinary Register.

8.7 Major Breach – Inquiry by the Misconduct Tribunal for alleged major breaches of the Code of Conduct.

- This process is designed to address a more serious breach of the Code of Conduct.

8.8 The Board shall:

- 8.8.1 Appoint three (3) members to form a Misconduct Tribunal.
- 8.8.2 One member shall be appointed as the Chair.
- 8.8.3 The Director Member Services shall assist in all the administrative functions of the Misconduct Tribunal.
- 8.8.4 The Director Member Services may be one of the three members selected.
- 8.8.5 The Board may request assistance or advice from an external organisation, when appropriate. One example is the Canberra Region Rugby League Disciplinary Tribunal, but is not limited to one organisation.



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- 8.9 The Misconduct Tribunal shall, at the earliest possible opportunity, inform the member(s) against whom the allegation has been made and arrange for a Misconduct hearing to be convened at the earliest appropriate time.
- 8.10 The Director Member Services shall ensure that at least 7 days is allowed for the member against whom the allegation is made to prepare their case. At the request of the member against whom the allegation is made, additional time may be granted by the Chair of the Misconduct Tribunal, when necessary. The notice to the Member(s) shall:
- 8.10.1 be in writing and delivered to the individual concerned, and
  - 8.10.2 delivery may be by hand delivery, post, facsimile or electronic mail.
  - 8.10.3 clearly set out the nature, particulars, basis and level of the alleged breach, and
  - 8.10.4 clearly set out the sanctions as detailed at sub-rule 9.1, which may be imposed if it is determined that the alleged breach has occurred, and
  - 8.10.5 clearly set out the time, date, composition of and place at which the relevant Misconduct Tribunal hearing will be conducted, and
  - 8.10.6 advise the Member that he or she has the right to attend and speak at the meeting, and the right to submit to the hearing written representations regarding the alleged breach, and
  - 8.10.7 advise that the Member is entitled to representation at the hearing.
  - 8.10.8 Advise the member that all evidence presented at the Misconduct Tribunal will be electronically recorded.
- 8.11 A Misconduct hearing relating to a breach of this Code may be reconvened and/or adjourned at the discretion of the Board.
- 8.12 A Member does not have to prove his or her innocence and should not be disadvantaged unless the Board can establish a case against him or her.

- 8.13 The Misconduct Tribunal may make enquiries of other persons whether they are a member of the Association or not.
- 8.14 The Misconduct Tribunal upon completion of the hearing must provide an outcome to the Board in writing and a recommendation as to the penalty to be applied in line with section nine of this document. This correspondence should be submitted by the 'chair' of the tribunal.

## **9. *Disciplining of Members***

- 9.1 The Board may, by resolution, take whatever action it deems appropriate, against any member found guilty of an act of Misconduct. Such action may include (but is not limited to):
- 9.1.1 Expulsion;
  - 9.1.2 Suspension;
  - 9.1.3 Imposition of a Fine;
  - 9.1.4 Take other action as considered appropriate by the Board.
- 9.2 If the Board takes any action against a member, the Director, Executive Support must, within 7 days after the action is taken, cause written notice to be given to the member of the action taken, of the reasons given by the Board for having taken that action and of the member's right of appeal under sub-rule 10 of this Code.
- 9.3 Any resolution made under Section 9.1 does not take effect:
- 9.3.1 Until the expiration of the period within which the member is entitled to appeal against the resolution concerned; or
  - 9.3.2 If within that period the member exercises the right of appeal, unless and until the Association confirms the resolution under sub-rule 10, whichever is the later.

**10. Right of Appeal of Disciplined Member**

- 10.1 A member may appeal to the Executive Officer against a resolution of the Board under rule 9 of this Code, within 7 days after notice of the resolution is served on the member, by lodging with the Executive Officer a Notice of Appeal to that effect, in writing.
- 10.2 The notice must be accompanied by a statement of the grounds on which the member intends to rely for the purposes of the appeal.
- 10.3 On receipt of a notice from a member under sub-rule (10.1), the Executive Officer must notify the Board, which is to convene an Appeals Committee. The Chair of the Appeals Committee shall be a Member chosen by the Board. The Chair will then select two other Members to form the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee must not include any Board members, and must be able to act fully independently of the Board. A meeting of the Appeals Committee is to be held within 21 days after the date on which the Executive Officer received the notice.
- 10.4 At a Meeting of the Appeals Committee convened under sub-rule 10.3:
- 10.4.1 The Board and the member must be given the opportunity to state their respective cases orally or in writing, or both, and
- 10.4.2 The Appeals Committee may, take whatever action it deems appropriate. Such action may include (but is not limited to):
- 10.4.2.1 Overturning the finding of guilt;
- 10.4.2.2 Upholding the finding of guilt and penalty as imposed by the Board;
- 10.4.2.3 Upholding the finding of guilt and altering the penalty as imposed by the Board;
- 10.4.3 The Chair of the Appeals Committee must provide a written summary outlining the reasons for the decision, including any electronic recordings and/or other evidence produced at the hearing within seven days to the Board.

**11. *Apology***

In any case where a Referee has failed to comply with a provision of this Code, the Board may direct that Referee to apologise to any person or persons affected by that failure, in which event, that Referee shall apologise, in such terms as the Board may direct, without delay. Failure to observe this instruction may constitute a further breach of the Code of Conduct.

**12. *Changes to the Code of Conduct***

Alterations to the Code of Conduct shall be in accordance with the Articles of the Association.