

# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR & COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY

## Authority

This policy is made under the authority of Clause 5 subsection (iv) of the Constitution of the Bribie Island Tennis Club Incorporated (BITC) which states:

- (i) *If a member is convicted of an indictable offence; or*
- (ii) *Fails to comply with the provisions of these rules; or*
- (iii) *Conducts himself in a manner considered to be injurious or prejudicial to the character or interests of the Bribie Island Tennis Club Incorporated;*

*the Management Committee shall consider whether his membership shall be terminated.*

## Description

This Policy is in two parts.

**Part A** is the Code of Behaviour and clearly states the expectations of the Bribie Island Tennis Club with regard to standards of behaviour on its premises. It also explains who is covered by the Code of Behaviour. Examples are given to assist in understanding how the Code of Behaviour is applied in everyday situations.

From time to time, however, a person may feel they would like to draw a complaint to the attention of the BITC committee. **Part B** of this Policy explains the process to lodge a complaint about an alleged breach of the BITC Constitution or Code and the procedure that will be adopted to resolve the complaint.

**Note:** *Where the words "Bribie Island Tennis Club members" are written in this Policy, it is meant to refer to all persons covered by this Policy.*

## Where do I find this Policy?

The Code is available on the Bribie Island Club's website

<http://www.bribieislandtennisclub.com.au> . A copy is also pinned up on the Notice Board in the BITC Clubhouse. A copy may also be obtained from any Management Committee member or your tennis co-ordinator.

## Who is covered by this Policy?

The Code applies to all Senior, Junior and Honorary members of the Bribie Island Tennis Club. It also sets out expected standards of behaviour for volunteers, visiting players to the Club and contractors employed by the Club.

## Why is this Policy necessary?

Any Club with as diverse a membership as the BITC needs to clearly state expected standards of behaviour as well as consequences of breaching such standards. The process for investigating and resolving complaints involving alleged breaches of the Code of Behaviour must also be known and available to those covered by the Code.

## **PART A - CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

### **1: Respect for persons**

Bribie Island Tennis Club members will:

- Speak to each other in a respectful manner without using foul, racist or offensive language.
- Not engage in physical violence, verbal abuse, bullying, harassment or inappropriate and unwelcome behaviour towards another person.
- Ensure our behaviour is conducive to pleasant, social tennis being enjoyed by all.

#### **Examples of what not to do:**

- Continually interrupting players' concentration and enjoyment of social tennis by inappropriately loud chatter or other noise - a balance between social interaction and playing tennis must be achieved
- Continual swearing during play on court or at others while on BITC premises
- Making comments about another person's physical attributes or playing ability with the intention of insulting them
- Sending abusive or intimidating emails or posting material on Facebook or other social media with the intention of insulting, abusing or intimidating another BITC member.

### **2: Play Safely & Responsibly**

Bribie Island Tennis Club members will:

- Accept responsibility for their own safety.
- Be proactive in ensuring a safe environment in which to play tennis and socialise.
- Be mindful of each other's safety in so far as it is possible to do so.

#### **Examples of what not to do:**

- Not removing trip, slip or other hazards such as sticks/stones/other foreign material on the court
- Identifying a tear in the surface of the court and not telling either a committee member or tennis co-ordinator
- Spilling liquid on the floor of the club house and not cleaning it up
- Not reminding another player to wear sun protection or drink enough water

## **PART B - COMPLAINT HANDLING & INVESTIGATION & RESOLUTION PROCESS**

### **Step 1**

If a BITC player has a complaint, it is strongly advised that the issue is addressed and resolved informally between the parties in the first instance. Assistance and/or advice may be sought from others such as a Committee Member or Tennis Co-ordinator. Experience has shown that informal resolution results in the best outcome for all parties.

Mediation may be an option at this stage and should be discussed with the members concerned. The Dispute Resolution Centre (Department of Justice & Attorney-General) offer a free mediation service.

## **Step 2**

If informal resolution is not successful or considered inappropriate, a formal, written complaint outlining the alleged breach of this policy may be lodged with any Committee Member.

Anonymous complaints will not be accepted or acted upon.

When writing the complaint, please include the following information:

- a detailed description of the situation with specifics such as dates, times and places
- any supporting evidence such as the names of other persons who were present or copies of any written material such as emails, letters, Facebook or other social media posts, etc.
- a statement outlining the desired outcome of the complaint e.g. a written apology

## **Step 3**

Upon receipt of a written, formal complaint, the Committee Member shall inform the President who must call a meeting of the Committee within 3 days. The meeting does not need to be face-to-face. At this meeting, the Committee shall determine how the complaint will be handled. Options at this point are:

- no further action
- mediation between the parties (using the Dispute Resolution Centre); and
- investigation.

Offering mediation does not preclude an investigation being undertaken at a later time should a mediated outcome not be achieved.

If an investigation is determined to be warranted, the Committee must nominate a person to do this. Ideally this person should be trained in investigation processes but at a minimum, they must be, and perceived to be, impartial.

An investigation will be underpinned by the principles of:

- fairness
- transparency; and
- natural justice

The investigation shall be completed and a written report, including recommendations, submitted to the Committee within 14 days of the committee appointing the investigator. In exceptional circumstances, the President may extend this timeframe by 7 days.

#### **Step 4**

Upon reading and considering the Investigation Report, including its recommendations, the Committee shall determine the intended outcome of the complaint. Outcomes include, but are not limited to:

1. Not proven
2. Proven, no further action
3. Proven, negotiated outcome such as an apology accepted
4. Proven, informal warning given
5. Proven, formal warning given
6. Proven, suspension from BITC for a specified period
7. Proven, expulsion from BITC

Membership fees are not refunded should a BITC member be suspended or expelled.

The Committee must notify the BITC member of the intended outcome within 7 days of the determination being made.

Where an outcome of "no further action" is determined, Steps 5 and 6 are omitted.

#### **Step 5**

The BITC member has 7 days in which to respond in writing to the Committee should an outcome other than "not proven" or "no further action" be contemplated.

#### **Step 6**

Upon reading and considering the BITC member's written response, a final determination of the outcome will be made by the Committee.

#### **Step 7**

The complainant and other parties to the complaint shall be notified in writing of the outcome determined by the Committee. All parties to the complaint will receive a copy of the Investigation Report, unless exceptional circumstances exist and the Committee determines otherwise. In that case, the Committee may choose to release part or none of the Report or provide a précis of the Report or the recommendations only.

#### **Confidentiality**

All information collected during the investigation as well as the Report itself is confidential. All BITC members involved in the complaint process, including Committee members, are obliged to respect this confidentiality and must not disclose any information to any other person including other BITC members. Breach of this confidentiality is a breach of the BITC Code of Behaviour.

All material collected during the investigation as well as the Report will be confidentially and securely stored off site with the Secretary for 12 months from the completion of the investigation.

The Committee's determination is final. Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may investigate what civil remedies are available.