



EMCA Complaints & Grievance Procedure Background

EMCA takes seriously its responsibilities towards Cheer participants and parents, in ensuring that it provides a safe and equitable environment for all. Notwithstanding this it recognises that on occasions individuals may wish to register a complaint or grievance and, in such cases, it will follow this procedure.

Policy

It is EMCA club policy that this procedure will be adopted in a manner so as to make those wishing to register a complaint or grievance to feel they may do so safe in the knowledge it will be dealt with fairly and that they should feel free to raise their concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal. It is further considered to be appropriate that wherever possible such matters should be dealt with amicably within the club itself, preferably bilaterally between the aggrieved party and the person believed by them to be the cause of the issue or concern. It accepts that in some circumstances this may be considered to be inappropriate in which case the matter may be referred to another party within the club. Although club members are asked to follow this policy EMCA members are always free to pursue a complaint directly through the Formal Review Committee should they consider it appropriate to do so.

Procedure

Rather than allowing an issue or concern to fester it is strongly advised that any person suffering a grievance should raise it promptly as soon as the issue manifests itself. It is anticipated that the following stages be followed in sequence although it is understood that in some circumstances the first stage may be omitted where the aggrieved party considers it to be inappropriate or potentially inflammatory.

Stage 1 - Informal review

This stage applies only to grievances against club officials; under no circumstances ought members air grievances with or against other members other than directly with club officials. As soon as an aggrieved party is clear about their concerns they ought, wherever reasonably possible, approach the club official they believe to be the principle source of the grievance for an informal discussion. Such discussions must not be held in open forum or, if involving a coach, during training times if there is any reason to consider that discussion might become prolonged or disruptive. All club officials are charged with making themselves available to listen to such concerns objectively and, where the concerns are legitimate and appear to be in breach of club policy, to remedy the issue as soon as is reasonably practicable. Should the concern not be considered legitimate for good reason and such reasons are clearly stated to the aggrieved party who accepts the explanation then no further action is required. In the event the parties are unable to reach such an agreement the procedure will proceed to stage 2.



Stage 2 - Formal review

Any formal grievance must be submitted in writing to the club's committee for the attention of either the:

- Chairperson where it relates to a coaching or training matter,
- Welfare Officer where it relates to a child (or vulnerable person) welfare issue, or
- Club Secretary where it relates to any other issue (or to one of the above).

All such complaints will be registered by the Club Secretary and become a matter of record (subject to appropriate confidentiality being maintained). Upon receipt of a written grievance the recipient (Responder) will:

- Collect the Formal Review Committee (made up from 3 anonymous members of the EMCA committee) who will consider the matter and seek a resolution in line with the clubs constitution.
- If the matter is deemed serious, Coaches, parents and or Cheer participants may be suspended from EMCA until the Formal Review or Executive Committees have made a decision.
- Then, depending on the nature or significance of the complaint, the Formal Review Committee may either: Attempt to resolve the situation by implementing an action which is fair, reasonable and proportional to the complaint, or If the matter cannot be resolved it should be passed to the EMCA Executive Committee.
- The Formal Review and Executive Committee have the power in accordance with the constitution to:
 - Issue a warning as to future conduct
 - Suspend membership and participation
 - Remove from membership and participation any person and their families/careers/representatives.
- Once an action has been determined the accused person(s) will be notified in writing of the course of action to be taken and the aggrieved party will be informed about the outcome of the enquiry by the Executive Committee.
- In the event the grievance is upheld and action is taken against the accused person(s) they will have the right to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the letter describing the course of action and Stage 3 of this procedure will then be implemented.
- Should a grievance not be upheld, the aggrieved party will have the right to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the letter describing the outcome and Stage 3 of this procedure will then be implemented.



Stage 3 – Escalation or Appeal

- Appeals will be made in writing to the EMCA Executive Committee. Such appeals must include the original grievance, the documented response and clear justifications for the basis of the appeal explaining why the outcome by the Formal Review Committee was flawed.
- Upon receipt of an appeal the EMCA Executive Committee will:
 - Review the submission and determine whether there is a clear case of error or not. In the event the appeal is considered frivolous or argumentative the appeal may be rejected at this stage without further review and under the constitution The Executive Committee may unanimously and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual. This is provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Executive Committee.
 - Where the Executive Committee considers the appeal may have merit they will:
 - Resolve the situation with an action which they deem to be fair. In line with EMCA constitution.

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