SPVC Club Dispute Resolution Policy

1. **Purpose**
   The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair, transparent, and timely process for resolving concerns and disputes within the club. The club is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all participants.

2. **Scope**
   This policy applies to all club participants, including athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, team staff and volunteers, and board members.

3. **Roles and Responsibilities**

   Club
   The Club is responsible for:

   - Acting as the **primary point of contact** for resolving non–Safe Sport concerns
   - Ensuring this policy is communicated, accessible, and applied consistently
   - Providing fair, timely, and impartial resolution processes
   - Managing conflicts of interest appropriately
   - Maintaining documentation of complaints, decisions, and outcomes
   - Enforcing club rules, codes of conduct, and disciplinary measures
   - Escalating matters to Volleyball Alberta where required
   - Referring all suspected maltreatment to the Alberta Safe Sport Complaints Mechanism

   Athletes
   Athletes are expected to:

   - Raise concerns respectfully and in good faith
   - Attempt to resolve issues at the appropriate level first
   - Follow team and club codes of conduct
   - Participate honestly in resolution processes

   Parents/Guardians
   Parents/guardians are expected to:

   - Support their child in raising concerns appropriately
   - Respect the club's dispute resolution process
   - Communicate constructively and respectfully with coaches and club representatives
   - Avoid escalating concerns externally before the club process is completed (unless related to Safe Sport).

Coaches and Team Staff
Coaches and team staff are responsible for:

- Addressing team-level concerns promptly and fairly
- Maintaining open and respectful communication
- Applying rules and expectations consistently
- Identifying when issues should be escalated to club leadership
- Cooperating fully in dispute resolution processes

Club Board/Designated Liaison
The Board or designated liaison is responsible for:

- Conducting club-level reviews
- Ensuring impartiality and managing conflicts of interest
- Making or facilitating fair decisions based on available information
- Communicating outcomes clearly and respectfully
- Appointing mediators or panels when necessary

4. **Guiding Principles**
   All disputes will be addressed according to the following principles:
   - Respect and fairness for all parties
   - Timeliness in addressing concerns
   - Confidentiality where appropriate
   - Progressive resolution, starting at the lowest appropriate level
   - Impartial decision-making free from conflicts of interest
   - Alignment with Volleyball Alberta policies
   - Retaliation for raising concerns in good faith is prohibited.

5. **Types of Concerns Covered**
   This policy covers concerns such as: team selection or playing time decisions, coaching decisions or communication, team expectations, scheduling, parent behaviour, conduct of members including athletes/coaches/staff/board members, and club operations (fees, refunds, fundraising expectations). Allegations of maltreatment (i.e., abuse, harassment, discrimination) must be reported through the Alberta Safe Sport Complaints Mechanism.

6. **Dispute Resolution Process**

   Step 1: Direct Communication
   Individuals are encouraged to address concerns directly with the person involved. Note: communication must remain respectful and solution focused. Example – athlete to athlete concern.

Step 2: Team-Level Resolution
If unresolved, concerns should be brought to the **coach** (or club management if the coach is involved). If a conflict of interest exists (e.g., family relationships, dual roles), the concern should be directed to a designated club liaison instead.

Step 3: Club-Level Review
The concern should be submitted in writing to the designated Club Liaison or Board Representative. The reviewer must confirm that they have **no conflict of interest**. If a conflict exists, the matter will be reassigned to another board member or independent party. The Club will acknowledge receipt within 5 business days.

Step 4: Mediation
If parties fail to come to a resolution, the club will assign an **impartial mediator or panel** to facilitate resolution**.**

7. **Records and Reporting**
   The club will maintain confidential records of complaints and outcomes. Clubs will provide Volleyball Alberta with information regarding the outcomes of internal processes for the purposes of oversight, risk management and transparency.

8. **Annual Review**
   This Dispute Resolution policy will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with Volleyball Alberta policies and Safe Sport standards, including best practices related to conflicts of interest.

Note: The Volleyball Alberta complaint system is not to be utilized for the same or a substantially similar matter that is already under review, has been decided or has been adequately addressed by another appropriate forum.

Club Progressive Discipline Framework

Clubs are responsible for:

- Day-to-day supervision and behaviour management.
- Establishing and enforcing codes of conduct.
- Local conflict resolution.
- Addressing inappropriate behaviour that does not meet the threshold of maltreatment.
- Enforcing club policies.
- Documenting concerns, actions taken, and outcomes
- Referring possible maltreatment to the Alberta Safe Sport Complaints Mechanism.

The club is committed to addressing behaviour concerns fairly, consistently, and proportionately. Not all steps are required in every situation; serious incidents may escalate immediately.

For behaviour concerns, the progressive discipline framework would typically begin at the Team Level, with a verbal warning from the Coach. Continued concerns would be addressed by a formal written warning. If concerns are not resolved, a meeting would occur with Club Leadership.

Possible **Outcomes for Athletes** may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal warning
- Written warnings (clarifying expectations and appropriate behaviour)
- Formal apologies
- Monetary penalties (i.e., fines)
- Loss of playing time
- Suspension from games or practices
- Removal from tournaments or travel
- Removal from the club

Note: All fees paid are non-refundable if an athlete is removed due to disciplinary decisions.

Possible **Outcomes for Parents/Guardians** may include, but are not limited to:

- Formal apologies
- Verbal or written warnings
- Restricted communication (i.e., designated contact person)
- Monetary penalties
- Removal of attendance privileges at games/tournaments, practices, or events
- Suspension or removal of their child from the club

Possible **Outcomes for Coaches** may include, but are not limited to:

- Formal apologies
- Verbal or written warnings
- Mandatory education or training
- Mandatory mentorship or supervision
- Suspension of duties
- Dismissal from role

The club will refer matters to Volleyball Alberta when:

- Behaviour involves Safe Sport violations
- Disciplinary measures exceed club authority
- Required under provincial policy

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