



Complaints Policy

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Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Pétanque is a sport that should be enjoyed by all who participate, whether as players, officials, volunteers or spectators. In producing this Complaints Policy, Pétanque England believes that the highest standards of integrity can be maintained at all levels of the sport, thereby ensuring that the sport can be enjoyed by all. This Complaints Policy applies to all individual members, Regions and Clubs involved in our sport at all levels.
- 1.2 This Complaints Policy is adopted by the Pétanque England Board of Directors on the 20th February 2024.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 This is the Policy of Petanque England. It sets out the procedures for making a Complaint and how a Complaint will be handled. The Policy ensures that a framework is in place to enable a Complaint to be dealt with in a timely, fair and proportionate manner.
- 2.2 When a Complaint is made we will:
 - 2.2.1 Provide a consistent approach in dealing with all Complaints.
 - 2.2.2 Provide a system whereby a Complaint can be dealt with promptly, fairly, and politely.
 - 2.2.3 Treat the Complaint and the Complainant with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times. We expect the Complainant to treat our people who deal with the Complaint with the same courtesy, respect and fairness.
 - 2.2.4 Deal with the Complaint swiftly, thoroughly, impartially, and confidentially.
 - 2.2.5 Ensure that, where necessary, a Complaint is learned from.
 - 2.2.6 Provide an effective response and ensure, where appropriate, the cause of the Complaint is addressed.
 - 2.2.7 Respect Complainants' desire for confidentiality wherever possible.
 - 2.2.8 Not treat anyone less favourably on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

3. How to make a Complaint

- 3.1 If we have failed to live up to our values, fallen below the high standards of service you would expect from Petanque England and you wish to make a Complaint, you can write to us with specific details of your Complaint so that we can deal with your concerns effectively.
- 3.2 If you wish to make a Complaint, you can do so by completing the form which is attached to this Policy in Appendix A or by sending an email to the Complaints Case Officer: complaint@petanque-england.uk

4. How a Complaint will be dealt with

- 4.1 If you make a Complaint we will aim to:
 - 4.1.1 Acknowledge your Complaint within five working days;
 - 4.1.2 resolve your Complaint; and

- 4.1.3 provide a full written response within twenty working days.
- 4.2 Your Complaint will be investigated by Petanque England's Complaints Case Officer, who is responsible for recording, co-ordinating and responding to any investigation or action in relation to your Complaint. If the Complaints Case Officer is unable to respond to you within twenty working days due to a more complex investigation, we will let you know.
- 4.3 If you are not satisfied with the response, the outcome or the way in which your Complaint has been handled, you can ask for your Complaint to be reviewed. This must be done within fourteen days of the date of the formal response, setting out the reasons for the request.
- 4.4 Your Complaint will be reviewed by a member of our team who has not previously been involved and we will aim to provide you with a final response within twenty working days of your request. If we are unable to respond within this timeframe, we will let you know. We will review the initial Complaint, any investigations or enquiries that have been carried out and the formal response that has been provided. We will then provide a final response. Please note that the response provided at this stage is final - there is no further escalation or appeal process.

5. Who can make a Complaint

- 5.1 Anyone, member or non-member, can make a Complaint to Petanque England.

6. Policy Coverage

- 6.1 This Policy covers all issues relating to services or acts of Petanque England.
- 6.2 Complaints relating to the conduct or behaviour of Petanque England Umpires, Coaches or members where there is an allegation of misconduct should be made using the Disciplinary Policy. This can be found on the Petanque England website www.petanque-england.uk.
- 6.3 Complaints, allegations or concerns about safeguarding should be raised by contacting the Lead Safeguarding Officer for either Petanque England or the Region concerned. Should a Complaint be made to Petanque England that has a safeguarding element to it, it will be dealt with by the designated Lead Safeguarding Officer for Petanque England.
- 6.4 Petanque England Regions and Clubs should have their own Complaints procedure and any Complaints relating to a Region, Club or Committee dispute within the remit of the constitution, matters relating to the normal business of a Region, Club or Committee, the administration of a Region or Club, their fees, rules and requirements should be directed to the Region or Club for response and are not covered by this Policy.
- 6.5 Complaints about the performance or conduct of Petanque England Directors should be addressed to the Company Secretary or the Complaints Case Officer.
- 6.6 There are some Complaints not covered under this Policy, such as:
 - 6.6.1 Complaints not related to the sport of pétanque or Petanque England.
 - 6.6.2 Personal disputes not related to the sport of pétanque.
 - 6.6.3 Complaints of a criminal nature which will be passed to the police and then investigated under the disciplinary regulations.

- 6.6.4 Issues relating to non-permitted events delivered by third parties.
- 6.6.5 Complaints or appeals relating to pétanque events and the decisions of Umpires, competitions and events under the jurisdiction of Petanque England (e.g. sanctions and penalties).
- 6.6.6 Complaints outside of the jurisdiction of Petanque England about partners, suppliers and sponsors and any organisation contracted to work for us.
- 6.7 The timescales set out in the Complaints Policy will be adhered to wherever possible. Petanque England recognises that a degree of flexibility may be required in the application of timescales. Therefore, failure to adhere to the timescales will not invalidate the Complaints Policy or process.

7. Repeat, Unreasonable, and Vexatious or Aggressive Complaints

- 7.1 If a Complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their Complaint, we will not be able to take any further action, provided the procedure has been followed. Repeated Complaints about the same issue will not change this.
- 7.2 Sometimes Complainants can become unreasonable, vexatious or aggressive, causing undue stress to staff and volunteers and resulting in a disproportionate use of Petanque England's resources.
- 7.3 Unreasonable Complaints are those which, because of the nature of the contact or the frequency with which the Complaint is pursued, interfere with our ability to properly consider the issues involved or make unjustified demands on our time. Unreasonable Complaints may be legitimate Complaints that are being pursued inappropriately, or Complaints that appear to be without merit or that have already been fully investigated or responded to.
- 7.4 Vexatious or aggressive behaviour by Complainants may include excessive and repeated attempts to contact staff and volunteers, pursuing multiple Complaints against the organisation at the same time, making unreasonable demands of staff and volunteers, making threats (including threats of legal action) against staff/volunteers or the organisation, repeatedly making unreasonable Complaints, making multiple Complaints about Petanque England to different external organisations.
- 7.5 Where a Complaint is deemed to be repetitive, unreasonable and vexatious or aggressive, or is deemed to be unfounded or lacking in substance, Petanque England reserves the right not to investigate. In extreme cases of vexatious and/or persistent Complaints, disciplinary action may be taken against members and connected participants.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1 All Complaints are treated with confidentiality wherever possible.
- 8.2 We will respect anonymity and where a Complainant wishes to make an anonymous Complaint, they should be informed that their concern will be recorded and considered. However, it may be difficult for a Complaint investigation to proceed without being able to verify who the Complainant is and with whom information is shared.
- 8.3 In certain circumstances, for example where there is a safeguarding concern and referral to statutory agencies is required, we cannot guarantee that details of the Complaint will remain within Petanque England. If an allegation is of a

potentially criminal nature, external agencies such as the police must be notified and may request details of the Complaint held.

- 8.4 In accordance with the Data Protection Act, we will protect any personal or sensitive data during our Complaints process and any records we are required to keep. For more information about how Petanque England uses your information, please see our Privacy Policy.

9. Policy Review

- 9.1 The Complaints Policy will be reviewed periodically, but at least once every two years.
- 9.2 Specific audits of any part of the process may be carried out at the discretion of Petanque England.

Contact Details

Complaints Case Officer: complaint@petanque-england.uk

Company Secretary: secretary@petanque-england.uk

Appendix A

Form 1 - Complaint Form

If you require further guidance, please contact the relevant Petanque England Disciplinary Case Officer for further advice.

Your Name	
Date	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone or Mobile No	
Date, Time and Place of your Complaint	
Please give details of your Complaint	

Appendix A

Form 1 - Complaint Form cont:

What actions, if any, have you taken, to date, to resolve the situation?	
Have you previously spoken to anyone about your Complaint? If so, who? What was the response?	
What actions, if any, have you taken, to date, to resolve the situation?	
Print name:	
Your signature:	
Date:	



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