



Anti-Bullying Policy

Effective December 1st 2025
Date:

Pinnacles FC has adhered to this Anti-Bullying Policy to help guide and protect the children that participate in our activities as players, referees, coaches or in any other capacity. Bullying can be defined as intentional hurtful and aggressive behaviour that makes others feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, and it is the responsibility of the club, our staff and volunteers to create a safe, free of bullying soccer environment.

**Resources below were provided by the Government of British Columbia*

IMPORTANCE OF AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

According to the data provided by the Provincial Government, 1 in 3 Canadian teens say they've been bullied recently and almost half of Canadian parents say their kid has been bullied at some point.

A person who shows bullying behaviour usually picks on another person's culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, looks, religion, or sexual orientation - children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-spirited, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) are discriminated against three times more than heterosexual students.

The effects of bullying can be traumatic and long-lasting, affecting even adulthood by causing extended psychological harm.

DEFINING BULLYING

It's important to know the difference between bullying and single acts of aggression or conflict. Not all mean or rude behaviour or conflict is bullying. Understanding the difference helps when it comes to knowing how to intervene.

Bullying is a persistent pattern of unwelcome or aggressive behaviour that hurts others physically and/or emotionally. For a situation to be considered bullying, three indicators are usually present:

- **Power** – children who bully acquire their power through physical size and strength, by status within the peer group, and by recruiting support of the group.
- **Frequency** – bullying is not a random act. It is this factor that brings about the anticipatory terror in the mind of the child being bullied that can be so detrimental and have the most debilitating long-term effects.
- **Intent to harm** – children who bully generally do so with the intent to either physically or emotionally harm the other child.

A person who shows bullying behaviour says or does something intentionally hurtful to others and they keep doing it, with no sense of regret or remorse – even when it's obvious that they've hurt a person or when they're asked to stop.

TYPES OF BULLYING

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing, damaging property.
- **Verbal** – name-calling, insulting others, teasing, intimidating others, making homophobic or racist comments, verbal abuse.
- **Social and emotional (or relational)** – Doing things to harm someone else's reputation or make them feel embarrassed or humiliated by lying, spreading rumours, making mean gestures or jokes, excluding someone.
- **Cyber** – teasing or humiliating a person online using social media, cruel websites (e.g. posting photos of others on rating websites), video games, instant message or texting. Cyberbullying is constantly evolving and changing with new technology and it can reach a child even in the privacy of their own home.

SIGNS THAT A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

Kids who are being bullied by others will often display a change in behaviour or emotions, like:

- Not wanting to go to school or participate in extra-curricular activities.
- Anxious, fearful or over-reactive.
- Having low self-esteem and making negative comments about themselves or a former friend
- Regular complaints of stomachaches, headaches, and other physical symptoms without any particular cause.
- Less interest in school or soccer.
- Injuries, bruising, damaged clothing, or broken items.
- Unhappy and irritable.
- Trouble sleeping, nightmares, bedwetting.
- Frequently crying.
- Threatens to hurt themselves or others.
- Significant changes in social life (i.e. no one is calling or inviting them out).

SIGNS THAT A CHILD IS ENGAGING IN BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Kids who exhibit bullying behaviour may show signs that they are using power aggressively, such as:

- Little concern for the feelings of others.
- Aggressive with siblings, parents, teachers, friends and animals.
- Bossy and manipulative to get their own way.
- Coming home with unexplained objects or extra money.
- Secretive about possessions, activities or where they've been.
- Easily frustrated and quickly angered.
- Believe aggression is an acceptable way to resolve conflicts.
- Abuse others physically or verbally.
- Get into fights and blame others for starting them.
- Have a need to dominate others.
- Have two or three friends who are also aggressive.
- Hang out with increasingly younger children.
- Quick to interpret accidents or neutral events as deliberate hostile acts.

BULLYING REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. Any individual may report an incident or complaint to PFC Office, in writing or via email to admin@pinnaclesfc.ca within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident, although this timeline can be waived or extended at the executive level. the complaint should include:
 1. the names of the parties involved,
 2. any witnesses to the incident(s),
 3. the location, date, and time of the incident(s),
 4. details about the incident(s) (behaviour and/or words used).
2. Officials are required to submit the appropriate reports/complaints in accordance with District, League and BC Soccer Association rules.
3. The Office may determine that the alleged incident may contain an element of discrimination, harassment, workplace harassment, workplace violence, sexual harassment, or abuse. In this case, the Ombudsperson will appoint a Discipline Panel to conduct a thorough review of the complaint/incident. The Discipline Committee will recommend an appropriate course of action for dealing with complaints of this nature.
4. At PFC discretion, PFC may act as the Complainant and initiate the complaint process under the terms of this Policy. In such cases, PFC will identify an individual to represent PFC
5. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Ombudsperson has the discretion to choose which process should be followed, and may use the following examples as a general guideline:
 1. Process #1 - the Complaint alleges the following incidents:
 1. Disrespectful, abusive, racist, or sexist comments or behaviour
 2. Disrespectful conduct
 3. Minor incidents of physical aggression (e.g., tripping, pushing, elbowing)
 4. Conduct contrary to the values of PFC
 5. Non-compliance with PFC policies, procedures, rules, or regulations
 6. Minor violations of PFC Code of Conduct and Ethics
 2. Process #2 - the Complaint alleges the following incidents:
 1. Repeated minor incidents
 2. Any incident of hazing
 3. Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct
 4. Major incidents of violence (e.g., fighting, attacking, sucker punching)
 5. Pranks, jokes, or other activities that endanger the safety of others
 6. Conduct that intentionally interferes with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for a competition
 7. Conduct that intentionally damages PFC image, credibility, or reputation
 8. Consistent disregard for PFC bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations
 9. Major or repeated violations of PFC Code of Conduct and Ethics
 10. Intentionally damaging Organization property or improperly handling PFC monies
 11. Abusive use of alcohol, any use or possession of alcohol by minors, or use or possession of illicit drugs and narcotics
 12. A conviction for any Criminal Code offense
 13. Any possession or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods.

DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Process #1: Handled by Discipline Committee

Sanctions

Following the determination that the complaint or incident should be handled under Process #1, the Discipline Committee will review the submissions related to the complaint or incident and determine one or more of the following sanctions:

1. Verbal or written reprimand
2. A verbal or written apology
3. Service or other contribution to PFC
4. Removal of certain privileges
5. Suspension from certain teams, events, and/or activities
6. Suspension from all PFC activities for a designated period of time
7. Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offense

The Discipline Panel will decide who will inform the Respondent of the sanction, which will take effect immediately.

Records of all sanctions will be maintained by PFC.

Request for Reconsideration

The sanction may not be appealed until the completion of a Request for Reconsideration.

The Respondent may contest the sanction by submitting a Request for Reconsideration within two (2) days of receiving the sanction. In the Request for Reconsideration, the Respondent must indicate:

1. Why the sanction is inappropriate;
2. All evidence to support the Respondent's position; and
3. What penalty or sanction (if any) would be appropriate

Upon receiving a Request for Reconsideration, the Discipline Panel may decide to accept or reject the Respondent's suggestion for an appropriate sanction.

Should the Discipline Panel accept the Respondent's suggestion for an appropriate sanction, that sanction will take effect immediately.

Should the Discipline Panel not accept the Respondent's suggestion for an appropriate sanction, the initial complaint or incident will be handled under Process #2 of this Policy.

Process #2: Handled by Discipline Panel

Case Manager

Following the determination that the complaint or incident should be handled under Process #2, PFC will appoint a Discipline Panel to oversee the management and administration of the complaint or incident.

The Discipline Panel should not be in a conflict of interest and should have experience in dispute resolution matters. Such an appointment is not appealable.

The Discipline Panel has a responsibility to:

1. Determine whether the complaint is frivolous and/or within the jurisdiction of this Policy
 - Propose the use of PFC's *Dispute Resolution Policy*
1. Coordinate all administrative aspects and set timelines
2. Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Discipline Panel as required
3. Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding

BULLYING CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Procedures

If the Discipline Panel determines the complaint is:

1. Frivolous or outside the jurisdiction of this Policy, the complaint will be dismissed immediately
2. Not frivolous and within the jurisdiction of this Policy, the Discipline Panel will notify the Parties that the complaint is accepted and of the applicable next steps
3. The Discipline Panel's decision to accept or dismiss the complaint may not be appealed.
4. The Discipline Panel will establish and adhere to timelines that ensure procedural fairness and that the matter is heard in a timely fashion.
5. After notifying the Parties that the complaint has been accepted, the Discipline Panel may propose using PFC's *Dispute Resolution Policy* with the objective of resolving the dispute. If applicable, and if the dispute is not resolved, or if the parties refuse to use the *Dispute Resolution Policy*, the Ombudsperson will appoint a Discipline Panel, which shall consist of three persons may be appointed to hear the complaint. In this event, the Ombudsperson will appoint one of the Discipline Panel's members to serve as the Chair.
6. The Ombudsperson, in cooperation with the Discipline Panel, will then decide the format under which the complaint will be heard. This decision may not be appealed. The format of the hearing may be an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or another communication medium, a hearing based on a review of documentary evidence submitted in advance of the hearing, or a combination of these methods.
7. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Ombudsperson and the Discipline Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:
 1. The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time, and place of the hearing, in the case of an oral in-person hearing or an oral hearing by telephone or another communication medium
 2. Copies of any written documents that the parties wish to have the Discipline Panel consider will be provided to all Parties, through the Ombudsperson, in advance of the hearing
 3. The Parties may engage a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense
 4. The Discipline Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing
 5. The Discipline Panel may allow as evidence at the hearing any oral evidence and document or thing relevant to the subject matter of the complaint but may exclude such evidence that is unduly repetitious, and shall place such weight on the evidence as it deems appropriate
 6. The decision will be by a majority vote of the Discipline Panel
 7. If the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, the Respondent may waive the hearing, in which case the Discipline Panel will determine the appropriate sanction. The Discipline Panel may still hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.
8. The hearing will proceed in any event, even if a Party chooses not to participate in the hearing.
9. If a decision may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to a complaint or an appeal in their own right, that party will become a Party to the current complaint and will be bound by the decision.
10. In fulfilling its duties, the Discipline Panel may obtain independent advice.

Decision

After hearing and/or reviewing the matter, the Discipline Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and, if so, the sanctions to be imposed. Within fourteen (14) days of the hearing's conclusion, the Discipline Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all Parties, the Case Manager, and the board. In extraordinary circumstances, the Discipline Panel may first issue a verbal or summary decision soon after the hearing's conclusion, with the full written decision to be

issued before the end of the fourteen (14) day period. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Discipline Panel.

Sanctions

The Discipline Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions, singularly or in combination:

1. Verbal or written reprimand
2. Verbal or written apology
3. Removal of certain privileges
4. Suspension from certain teams, events, and/or activities
5. Suspension from all PFC activities for a designated period of time
6. Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage
7. Suspension of funding from PFC or from other sources
8. Expulsion from PFC
9. Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offense

Unless the Discipline Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will begin immediately, notwithstanding an appeal. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Discipline Panel will result in an automatic suspension until such time as compliance occurs.

Records of all decisions will be maintained by PFC.

Appeals

The decision of the Discipline Panel may be appealed in accordance with PFC's *Appeal Policy*.

Suspension Pending a Hearing

PFC may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of an individual pending completion of a criminal process, the hearing, or a decision of the Discipline Panel.

Criminal Convictions

An individual's conviction for a *Criminal Code* offense, as determined by PFC, will be deemed an infraction under this Policy and will result in expulsion from PFC. *Criminal Code* offenses may include,

but are not limited to:

1. Any child pornography offenses
2. Any sexual offenses
3. Any offense of physical violence
4. Any offense of assault
5. Any offence involving the trafficking of illegal drugs

Confidentiality

The discipline and complaints process is confidential and involves only the Parties, the Case Manager, the Discipline Panel, and any independent advisors to the Discipline Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the Parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.

Retaliation

No person may engage in retaliation, intimidation, or any other form of punishment against individuals who raise good faith concerns about an offense or who assist in an investigation. Retaliation may be grounds for a complaint under this Policy.

Timelines

If the circumstances of the complaint are such that adhering to the timelines outlined by this Policy will not allow a timely resolution to the complaint, the Discipline Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

Records and Distribution of Decisions

Other individuals or organizations, including but not limited to, national sports organizations, provincial sports organizations, sports clubs, etc., may be advised of any decisions rendered in accordance with this Policy.

The decision of the Discipline Panel may be appealed in accordance with this policy.

DEFINITIONS

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:
 1. “Appellant” – The Party appealing a decision
 2. “Discipline Panel” – The individual who implements procedures described in this Appeal Policy. The Discipline Panel does not need to be a member of, or affiliated with, PFC.
 3. “Respondent” – The body whose decision is being appealed
 4. “Parties” – The Appellant, Respondent, and any other individuals affected by the appeal
 5. “Days” – Days including weekends and holidays
 6. “individuals” – All categories of membership defined in PFC Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, PFC including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, referees, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, Directors and Officers of PFC, spectators at events, and parents/guardians of athletes

PURPOSE OF POLICY

1. PFC is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals involved with PFC are treated with respect and fairness. PFC provides individuals with this Appeal Policy to enable fair, affordable, and expedient appeals of certain decisions made by PFC. Further, some decisions made by the process outlined in PFC Discipline and Complaints Policy may be appealed under this Policy.

ADULT REPRESENTATION

1. Appeals may be filed by an individual who is a minor (younger than 19 years old). Minors must have a parent/guardian or other adult serve as their representative during this process.
2. Communication from the Ombudsperson must be directed to the minor’s representative.
3. A minor is not required to attend an oral hearing if held.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

1. This Policy applies to all individuals. Any individual who is directly affected by a PFC decision shall have the right to appeal that decision provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal under the ‘Grounds for Appeal’ section of this Policy.
2. This Policy will apply to decisions relating to:
 3. Eligibility
 4. Selection
 5. Conflict of Interest
 6. Discipline
 7. Membership
1. This Policy will not apply to decisions relating to:
 1. Employment
 2. The rules of the sport

3. Selection criteria, quotas, policies, and procedures established by entities other than PFC
4. Substance, content, and establishment of team selection criteria.
5. Volunteer/coach appointments and the withdrawal or termination of that appointment.

TIMING OF APPEAL AND PROCESS

1. Individuals who wish to appeal a decision have ten (10) days from the date on which they received notice of the decision to submit, in writing to the Ombudsperson, the following:
 1. Notice of the intention to appeal
 2. Contact information of the appellant
 3. Name of the respondent and any affected parties, when known to the Appellant
 4. Date the appellant was advised of the decision being appealed
 5. A copy of the decision being appealed, or a description of the decision if the written document is not available
 6. Grounds for the appeal
 7. Detailed reasons for the appeal
 8. All evidence that supports these grounds
 9. Requested remedy or remedies

1. An individual who wishes to initiate an appeal beyond the ten (10) day period must provide a written request stating the reasons for an exemption. The decision to allow, or not allow, an appeal outside of the ten (10) day period will be at the sole discretion of the Discipline Panel and may not be appealed.

1. A decision cannot be appealed on its merits alone. An appeal may only be heard if there are sufficient grounds for appeal. Sufficient grounds include the Respondent:
 2. Made a decision that it did not have the authority or jurisdiction (as set out in the Respondent's governing documents) to make
 3. Failed to follow its own procedures (as set out in the Respondent's governing documents)
 4. Made a decision that was influenced by bias (where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the decision-maker appears not to have considered other views)
 5. Made a decision that was patently unreasonable

1. The Appellant must demonstrate, on a balance of probabilities, that the Respondent has made a procedural error as described in the 'Grounds for Appeal' section of this Policy and that this error had, or may reasonably have had, a material effect on the decision or decision-maker.

1. Upon receiving the notice of the appeal, the fee, and all other information (outlined in the 'Timing of Appeal' section of this Policy), PFC and the Appellant may first determine the appeal to be heard under PFC's *Dispute Resolution Policy*.
 2. The Discipline Panel has the following responsibilities:
 3. Determine if the appeal falls under the scope of this Policy
 4. Determine if the appeal was submitted in a timely manner
 5. Decide whether there are sufficient grounds for the appeal

1. If the appeal is denied on the basis of insufficient grounds, because it was not submitted in a timely manner, or because it did not fall under the scope of this Policy, the Appellant will be notified, in writing, of the reasons for this decision. This decision may not be appealed.
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1. The Discipline Panel shall notify the Parties that the appeal will be heard. The Discipline Panel shall then decide the format under which the appeal will be heard. This decision is at the sole discretion of the Discipline Panel and may not be appealed.
 2. If a Party chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing will proceed in any event.
 3. The format of the hearing may involve an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or other electronic means, a hearing based on a review of documentary evidence submitted in advance of the hearing, or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Discipline Panel and the Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:
 4. The hearing will be held within a timeline determined by the Discipline Panel
 5. The Parties will be given reasonable notice of the day, time, and place of the hearing
 6. Copies of any written documents that the parties wish to have the Panel consider will be provided to all Parties in advance of the hearing
 7. The Parties may be accompanied by a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense
 8. The Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing
 9. The Panel may allow as evidence at the hearing any oral evidence and document or thing relevant to the subject matter of the appeal but may exclude such evidence that is unduly repetitious and shall place such weight on the evidence as it deems appropriate
 10. If a decision in the appeal may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to an appeal in their own right under this Policy, that party will become a party to the appeal in question and will be bound by its outcome
 11. The decision to uphold or reject the appeal will be by a majority vote of Panel members
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1. In fulfilling its duties, the Panel may obtain independent advice.
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1. The Panel shall issue its decision, in writing and with reasons, within fourteen (14) days after the hearing's conclusion. In making its decision, the Panel will have no greater authority than that of the original decision-maker. The Panel may decide to:
 2. Dismiss the appeal and confirm the decision being appealed
 3. Allow the appeal and refer the matter back to the initial decision-maker for a new decision
 4. Allow the appeal and vary the decision
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1. The Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all Parties, the Ombudsperson, and the board. In extraordinary circumstances, the Panel may first issue a verbal or summary decision soon after the hearing's conclusion, with the full written decision to be issued thereafter. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Panel.

Retaliation

1. No person may engage in retaliation, intimidation, or any other form of punishment against an individual who files an appeal. Retaliation may be grounds for a complaint under the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

Timelines

1. If the circumstances of the appeal are such that adhering to the timelines outlined by this Policy will not allow a timely resolution to the appeal, the Ombudsperson and/or Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

Confidentiality

1. The appeals process is confidential and involves only the Parties, the Ombudsperson, the Panel, and any independent advisors to the Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the Parties will disclose confidential information to any person not involved in the proceedings.

Records and Distribution of Decisions

1. Other individuals or organizations, including but not limited to, national sports organizations, provincial sports organizations, sports clubs, etc., may be advised of any decisions rendered in accordance with this Policy.

Final and Binding

1. No action or legal proceeding will be commenced against PFC or individuals in respect of a dispute unless PFC has refused or failed to provide or abide by the dispute resolution process and/or appeal process as set out in PFC's governing documents.

In the event of a dispute involving two or more parties, PFC will direct the parties to resolve the dispute using the procedures outlined in this policy.

1. The following term has this meaning in this Policy:
 1. "Individuals" – All categories of membership defined in PFC Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, PFC including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, convenors, referees, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, and Directors and Officers of PFC, spectators, and parents/guardians of athletes
1. PFC supports the principles of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) and is committed to the techniques of negotiation, facilitation, and mediation as effective ways to resolve disputes. Alternate Dispute Resolution also avoids the uncertainty, costs, and other negative effects associated with lengthy appeals or complaints, or with litigation.
2. PFC encourages all individuals to communicate openly, collaborate, and use problem-solving and negotiation techniques to resolve their differences. PFC believes that negotiated settlements are usually preferable to outcomes resolved through other dispute resolution techniques. Negotiated resolutions to disputes with and among individuals are strongly encouraged. Application of this Policy

3. This Policy applies to all individuals.
4. Opportunities for Alternate Dispute Resolution may be pursued at any point in a dispute, per the Discipline and Complaints Policy or the Appeal Policy, when all parties to the dispute agree that such a course of action would be mutually beneficial. Facilitation and Mediation
5. The dispute will first be referred to the PFC for review, with the objective of resolving the dispute via Alternate Dispute Resolution and/or mediation.
6. If all parties to a dispute agree to Alternate Dispute Resolution, a mediator or facilitator, acceptable to all parties, shall be appointed to mediate or facilitate the dispute.
7. The mediator or facilitator shall decide the format under which the dispute shall be mediated or facilitated and shall specify a deadline before which the parties must reach a negotiated decision.
8. Should a negotiated decision be reached, the decision shall be reported to the Ombudsperson, and approved by the President. Any actions that are to take place as a result of the decision shall be enacted on the timelines specified by the negotiated decision, pending the President's approval.
9. Should a negotiated decision not be reached by the deadline specified by the mediator or facilitator at the start of the process, or if the parties to the dispute do not agree to Alternate Dispute Resolution, the dispute shall be considered under the appropriate section of the Appeal Policy or Discipline and Complaints Policy, as applicable.

FINAL AND BINDING

1. Any negotiated decision will be binding on the parties. Negotiated decisions may not be appealed.

BC SOCCER ALIGNMENT

All Pinnacles FC policies must align with BC Soccer's Bylaws, Rules & Regulations, and applicable Policies and procedures.

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