



QBA PROCEDURES FOR INFRACTIONS BY PLAYERS – 8/7/23

In dealing with complaints, the Queensland Bridge Association (QBA) should follow the procedures outlined below.

1. A complaint regarding an alleged breach of QBA rules or regulations by one or more players must be submitted to the QBA Manager by any one or more of the following:
 - Any player participating in a bridge session during which the alleged breach occurred;
 - Any person affected by the alleged breach;
 - The Director, Congress Director or the Tournament Organiser;
 - Any person affected by actions, or who believes that actions undertaken at, during, or any part of a bridge congress (such as prior to or subsequent to) that bring the game of bridge into disrepute;
2. Complaints must be submitted in writing. An email to the QBA Manager is acceptable.
3. Any written complaint must be made within 7 days of the date on which the alleged breach is said to have occurred.
4. The QBA Management Committee (MC) will decide whether an investigation of the complaint is required and, in making such a decision, may seek the advice of QBA General Counsel. The MC shall make its decision within 7 days of receipt from the QBA Manager.
5. If the complaint is to be investigated and dealt with, it shall be submitted by the MC to the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee (EDC). The EDC shall select and appoint three of its members to investigate the complaint. Once selected and appointed, those three members shall for all intents and purposes be, and carry out the functions of, the EDC as set out in these Procedures. The EDC will decide how the investigation will be dealt with and whether or not the EDC will hold a hearing or will consider the matter on the basis of written submissions only. The EDC will have total discretion to decide the matter and will seek the views of the parties identified as central to the complaint in exercising its decision. EDC shall make its decision in writing and submit it to the MC.

The EDC will observe the principals of 'natural justice' which require that the person who is the focus of the complaint has the right to be informed of:

- The existence of the complaint;
- The fact that an investigation has been authorised;
- The particulars of the complaint that will be considered;
- The form that the investigation will take;
- Their right to present a case dealing with the complaint either in writing or in person to the EDC; and
- Their right to seek advice and to be represented at any hearing of the EDC that he/she appears before.

The respondent has the opportunity to reply in writing before any such investigation.

If any action is to be taken against a person complained about (apart from a written warning), a hearing should be convened by the EDC and the person complained against should be given the opportunity to be heard in person.

The EDC will seek information and may allow comment from all persons who have knowledge of the incident under investigation. At any hearing, if the accused disputes facts, witnesses may give evidence on matters relevant to the findings of fact. The EDC should then consider the evidence that has been offered and reach a decision as to whether the complaint is substantiated.

6. If the EDC decides the complaint is substantiated, it will frame a recommendation as to an appropriate penalty.

The EDC will then report its findings and recommendations to the MC.

7. The MC will either accept the recommendations as to the decision and penalty or make its own decision.
8. The person complained against should be advised in writing that they may appeal to the full QBA Council for that decision to be reviewed. They should be given a timeframe of 14 days to lodge such an appeal, following which no appeal will be entertained.

Where any appeal is lodged, the MC shall explain its decision to the full QBA Council. The QBA Council can dismiss the appeal or make a new decision having considered all of the issues then before it.

The MC should make every effort to deal with complaints within 28 days from the date of receipt. Exceeding this timeframe will not invalidate any proceedings or decision of the MC.
