



Basketball Ireland Complaints Procedure

(Safeguarding, Discrimination, Prejudice & Inclusion-Related Matters)

1. Introduction

Basketball Ireland is committed to ensuring that all participants experience a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. This procedure outlines the formal pathway for raising and resolving complaints relating to:

- Safeguarding concerns
- Discrimination or prejudice
- Harassment or inappropriate behaviour
- Breaches of Basketball Ireland's Diversity & Inclusion standards

This document ensures that complaints are managed **fairly, consistently**, and **at the appropriate level** of the organisation, with clear rights of appeal at each stage.

2. Key Principles

- **Respect & Dignity** All individuals have the right to participate in basketball free from discrimination, harassment, or prejudice.
- **Confidentiality** Information is shared only with those who require it to manage the complaint.
- **Fairness & Natural Justice** All parties have the right to be heard and to respond to allegations.
- **Proportionality** Complaints are addressed at the most appropriate level, beginning with the club.
- **Oversight** The Basketball Ireland National Children's & Safeguarding Officer (NC&SO) provides oversight to ensure compliance with safeguarding and governance standards.
- **Right of Appeal** Each stage of the process includes a structured appeal mechanism.

3. Complaints Pathway

This is the **official and mandatory pathway** for all safeguarding, discrimination, prejudice, harassment, and inclusion-related complaints.

Step 1 — Club-Level Reporting & Investigation

All complaints **must be submitted to the Club Child Protection Officer (CPO)** in the first instance.

Process

1. The complaint is submitted to the **Club CPO**.
2. The Club CPO acknowledges receipt and initiates the club's internal investigation.
3. The club gathers statements, reviews evidence, and meets with relevant parties.
4. The club issues a **written decision** to the complainant and respondent.
5. The club provides a **right of appeal** to the **Local Area Board**.

Role of Basketball Ireland

- The BI NC&SO is notified for oversight.
- BI does **not** investigate or determine outcomes at club level.
- BI ensures the club follows correct safeguarding and governance procedures.



Step 2 — Appeal to the Local Area Board

If a party is dissatisfied with the club's decision, they may appeal to the **Local Area Board**.

Process

1. The appeal is submitted to the Area Board.
2. The Area Board convenes an appeals panel.
3. The panel reviews the club's investigation, the grounds of appeal, and any permitted new evidence.
4. The Area Board issues a **written decision**.
5. The decision includes a **right of appeal** to the **National Area Board Committee (NABC)**.

Role of Basketball Ireland

- Oversight only.
- Ensures procedural fairness.

Step 3 — Appeal to the National Area Board Committee (NABC)

If the party remains dissatisfied, they may appeal to the **NABC**.

Process

1. The appeal is submitted to the NABC.
2. The NABC conducts a national-level review of:
 - The Area Board's decision
 - Procedural fairness
 - The grounds of appeal
3. The NABC issues a **written decision**.
4. The decision includes a **right of appeal** to the **Basketball Ireland National Appeals Committee (NAC)**.

Role of Basketball Ireland

- Administrative support only.
- The NC&SO may provide context but does not influence the decision.

Step 4 — Appeal to the National Appeals Committee (NAC)

Final Stage

If the party wishes to escalate further, they may appeal to the **NAC**.

Process

1. The appeal is submitted to the NAC via the Basketball Ireland Office Manager.
2. The NAC conducts an **independent review** of the case.
3. The NAC issues the **final decision**, which:
 - Is binding
 - Concludes the internal complaints process
 - Has no further right of appeal within Basketball Ireland

4. Roles & Responsibilities

Club Child Protection Officer (CPO)

- First point of contact for all complaints
- Leads the club's internal investigation
- Issues the club's decision and appeal option

Local Area Board

- Hears appeals of club decisions
- Ensures fair and impartial review

National Area Board Committee (NABC)

- Hears appeals of Area Board decisions
- Ensures national consistency and procedural fairness

National Appeals Committee (NAC)

- Final independent appeals body
- Issues binding decisions

BI National Children's & Safeguarding Officer (NC&SO)

- Provides oversight at all stages
- Ensures safeguarding and governance compliance
- Does not investigate club-level complaints
- Does not participate in appeal decisions

5. Confidentiality & Data Protection

- Information is shared only with individuals who require it to manage the complaint.
- Personal data is processed under GDPR Article 6(1)(c) (legal obligation) and Article 6(1)(f) (legitimate interests).
- Special category data is processed under Article 9(2)(g) (substantial public interest – safeguarding).
- Where the Diversity & Inclusion Group is consulted, personal details are removed unless strictly necessary.

6. Contact Points

- **Club Child Protection Officer:** First point of contact
- **Local Area Board:** For appeals of club decisions
- **National Area Board Committee (NABC):** For appeals of Area Board decisions
- **National Appeals Committee (NAC):** Final appeal stage
- **BI National Children's & Safeguarding Officer:** safeguarding@ireland.basketball

7. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Safeguarding Concern** — Any issue involving the welfare or protection of children or vulnerable persons.
- **Discrimination** — Unfair treatment based on protected characteristics.
- **Harassment** — Unwanted conduct that violates dignity or creates a hostile environment.
- **Prejudice** — Negative assumptions about a person based on identity.
- **Diversity & Inclusion** — Ensuring equal respect, opportunity, and participation for all.