



# **SARPA Appeals Policy**

November 2013

# **SARPA APPEALS POLICY**

## **PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of this appeals policy is to enable disputes with members and participants to be dealt with fairly, expeditiously and affordably, within SARPA, without recourse to external legal procedures.

## **DEFINITIONS**

2. These terms will have these meanings in this policy:

- a) Days -- will mean total days, irrespective of weekends or holidays.
- b) Member -- refers to all categories of members in SARPA, as well as to all individuals engaged in activities with or employed by SARPA, including, but not limited to, players, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, team captains, medical and paramedical personnel, administrators and employees
- c) Appellant -- refers to the Member appealing a decision
- d) Respondent -- refers to the body whose decision is being appealed.

## **SCOPE OF APPEAL**

3. Any Member of SARPA who is affected by a decision of the Management Committee, of any Committee of the Management Committee, or of any body or individual who has been delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Management Committee, will have the right to appeal that decision, provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal as set out in Paragraph 7 of this policy. Examples of decisions that may be appealed include but are not limited to those relating to eligibility, carding, harassment, team selection and discipline.

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4. This policy will not apply to decisions relating to:

- a) Matters of employment;
- b) The rules of sports, which may not be appealed;
- c) Discipline matters arising during events organized by entities other than SARPA which are dealt with pursuant to the policies of these other entities; and
- d) Any decisions made under Paragraphs 6 and 9 of this policy.

## **TIMING OF APPEAL**

5. Members who wish to appeal a decision will have 21 days from the date on which they received notice of the decision, to submit in writing notice of their intention to appeal, grounds for the appeal and a summary of the evidence that supports these grounds, to the Chairperson of SARPA

6. Any party wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the 21-day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to the requirement of Paragraph 5. The decision to allow, or not allow an appeal outside the 21 day period will be at the discretion of the Management Committee and may not be appealed.

## **GROUNDINGS FOR APPEAL**

7. Not every decision may be appealed. Decisions may only be appealed, and appeals may only be heard, on procedural grounds. Procedural grounds are strictly limited to the Respondent:

- a) Making a decision for which it did not have authority or jurisdiction as set out in SARPA's governing documents;
- b) Failing to follow procedures as laid out in the bylaws or approved policies of SARPA or
- c) Making a decision that was influenced by bias.

## **SCREENING OF APPEAL**

8. Within 5 days of receiving the notice and grounds of an appeal, the Chairperson will determine whether there are appropriate grounds for the appeal to proceed as set out in Paragraph 7. In the absence of the Chairperson, a designate will perform this function.

9. If the appeal is denied on the basis of insufficient grounds, the Appellant will be notified of this

decision in writing, giving reasons. This decision is at the sole discretion of the Chairperson, or designate, and may not be appealed.

## **APPEALS PANEL**

10. If the Chairperson, or designate, is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal, within 14 days of having received the original notice of appeal the Chairperson will establish an Appeals Panel (hereafter referred to as the "Panel") as follows:

- a) The Panel will be comprised of three individuals who will have no significant relationship with the affected parties, will have had no involvement with the decision being appealed, and will be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.
- b) The Chairperson may designate one of the Panel members to serve as chairperson of the Panel.

### **PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE**

11. The Panel may determine that the circumstances of the appeal warrant a preliminary conference.

The matters that may be considered at a preliminary conference include:

- a) Format of the appeal (hearing by documentary evidence, oral hearing or a combination of both);
- b) Timelines for exchange of documents;
- c) Clarification of issues in dispute;
- d) Clarification of evidence to be presented to the Panel; order and procedure of hearing;
- e) Location of hearing, where the hearing is an oral hearing;
- f) Identification of witnesses; and
- g) Any other procedural matter that may assist in expediting the appeal proceedings.

12. The Panel may delegate to its Chairperson the authority to deal with these preliminary matters on behalf of the Panel.

### **PROCEDURE FOR THE HEARING**

13. Where the Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of oral hearing, the Panel will govern the hearing by such procedures as it deems appropriate, provided that:

- a) The hearing will be held within 21 days of the Panel's appointment.
- b) The Appellant and Respondent will be given 10 days written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing.
- c) A quorum will be all three Panel members.

Decisions will be by majority vote, where the Chairperson carries a vote.

- d) If the decision of the Panel 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.

e) Any of the parties may be accompanied by a representative or advisor, including legal counsel.

f) The Panel may direct that any other person participate in the appeal.

14. In order to keep costs to a reasonable level the Panel may conduct the appeal by means of a telephone conference.

### **PROCEDURE FOR DOCUMENTARY APPEAL**

15. Where the Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of documentary submissions, it will govern the appeal by such procedures as it deems appropriate provided that:

a) All parties are given a reasonable opportunity to provide written submissions to the Panel, to review written submissions of the other parties, and to provide written rebuttal and argument.

b) The applicable principles and timelines set out in Paragraph 12 are respected.

### **APPEAL DECISION**

16. Within 14 days of concluding the appeal, the Panel will issue its written decision, with reasons. In making its decision, the Panel will have no greater authority than that of the original decision-maker.

The Panel may decide:

a) To reject the appeal and confirm the decision being appealed; or

b) To uphold the appeal and refer the matter back to the initial decision-maker for a new decision; or

c) To uphold the appeal and vary the decision but only where it is found that an error occurred and such an error cannot be corrected by the original decision-maker for reason of lack of clear procedure, lack of time, or lack of neutrality;

17. A copy of this decision will be provided to each of the parties and to the Chairperson.

18. In extraordinary circumstances, the Panel may issue a verbal decision or a summary written decision, with reasons to follow, provided the written decision with reasons is rendered within the timelines

### **TIMELINES**

19. If the circumstances of the dispute are such that this policy will not allow a timely appeal, or if the circumstances of the disputes are such the appeal cannot be concluded within the timelines dictated in this policy, the Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

### **LOCATION**

20. The appeal will take place in the location designated by the Chairperson, unless the Panel decides the appeal is to be held by way of telephone conference, or unless, at the specific request of a party, a different location is mandated by the Panel as a preliminary matter.

### **FINAL AND BINDING DECISION**

21. The decision of the Panel will be final and binding on the parties and on all members of SARPA.