

Edgeworth & District Little Athletics Centre (EDLAC)

Integrity Framework Complaints, Disputes, and Discipline Policy

1. Introduction

Edgeworth & District Little Athletics Centre (EDLAC) is committed to providing a safe, fair, and inclusive environment for all participants. To uphold these values, EDLAC has adopted an Integrity Framework aligned with best practices in Australian community sport.

The EDLAC Integrity Framework is made up of three key policies: This Complaints, Disputes, and Discipline Policy, The Child Safeguarding Policy, and The Member Protection Policy.

These policies collectively define behaviours that are unacceptable, known as Prohibited Conduct, and outline how concerns will be addressed.

This Policy is based on and adapted from the Little Athletics Australia Integrity Framework – Complaints, Disputes, and Discipline Policy, to suit the operations and requirements of Edgeworth Little Athletics Centre (EDLAC).

Nothing in this framework overrides the EDLAC Constitution or the laws of the Commonwealth, State, or Territory, which take precedence and must be complied with in the first instance.

This Policy outlines the process for managing and resolving allegations of Prohibited Conduct.

2. Purpose

This Policy ensures that complaints, disputes, and allegations of misconduct involving ELAC and its participants are handled consistently, fairly, and efficiently. All complaints and reports will be managed by the Executive Committee of Edgeworth & District Little Athletics Centre.

3. Definitions

Activity: A sporting event, competition, training, or Centre activity organised by EDLAC or sanctioned events by NSW Athletics or Athletics Australia.

Centre: Edgeworth & District Little Athletics Centre.

Complaint: A formal notification alleging that a participant or representative has engaged in Prohibited Conduct.

Complainant: The person or organisation lodging the Complaint.

Respondent: The person or organisation against whom a Complaint is made.

Relevant Person: Anyone involved with EDLAC including athletes, volunteers, officials, administrators, and contractors.

Prohibited Conduct: Conduct that breaches any part of the Integrity Framework policies.

Vulnerable Person: A person under the age of 18 or someone unable to protect themselves due to age, illness, or disability.

Sanction: A disciplinary action taken in response to a breach.

Report: A notification about potential Prohibited Conduct which can be made anonymously.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all EDLAC participants, volunteers, administrators, employees, contractors, and any other person associated with EDLAC activities.

5. Jurisdiction

The Integrity Framework binds all individuals associated with EDLAC. Participation in EDLAC activities constitutes agreement to comply with this Framework.

6. Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited Conduct under this Policy includes but is not limited to:

- Failing to report known breaches,
- Providing false or misleading information,
- Breaching confidentiality obligations,
- Failing to comply with disciplinary outcomes.

7. How to Make a Complaint or Report

Complaint: A formal notification by someone directly affected by Prohibited Conduct.

Report: A notification (which can be anonymous) that alleges Prohibited Conduct.

How to Submit: Complaints and Reports must be submitted in writing (including electronic means) to the Centre Secretary, Centre Manager, or directly to the Executive Committee.

7.9 Responsibility for Managing Complaints

The Executive Committee of Edgeworth & District Little Athletics Centre is responsible for:

Receiving and assessing all complaints and reports,

Conducting investigations if necessary,

Deciding on provisional actions (e.g., interim suspensions),

Managing hearings if needed, and

Deciding on appropriate sanctions.

The Executive Committee may appoint a subcommittee to manage complex matters, but the final decision remains with the Executive Committee.

8. The Complaints Process

The Executive Committee will manage the complaints process, following these key steps.

However, If the complaint or alleged misconduct involves a member of the Executive Committee, the matter will be managed in accordance with the disciplinary or grievance procedures outlined in the Edgeworth Little Athletics Centre Constitution.

Initial Evaluation: Upon receiving a complaint, the Executive Committee will determine whether it falls within the scope of this Policy.

Assessment and Categorisation: The Committee will assess the seriousness and complexity of the complaint and determine the appropriate handling method.

Provisional Action: The Committee may impose provisional actions (such as temporary suspension) where needed to protect participants.

Investigation: If necessary, the Executive Committee (or a designated subcommittee) will investigate the complaint, providing all parties a fair opportunity to be heard.

Alternative Dispute Resolution: If both parties agree, the Executive Committee may facilitate a mediation process.

Important Note: All complaints and investigations will be handled confidentially and fairly, ensuring that natural justice principles are followed.

9. Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)

The Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) plays a key role in ensuring the fair and respectful treatment of all participants involved in EDLAC activities. The MPIO acts as an impartial and confidential point of contact for anyone with concerns about Prohibited Conduct, complaints, or the wellbeing of members within the club.

9.1 Purpose of the MPIO Role:

The MPIO supports the integrity of the complaints and disputes process by:

- Offering confidential guidance to members on their rights and options under this policy.
- Assisting complainants in understanding the complaint process and how to lodge a formal complaint or report.
- Referring individuals to the appropriate channels for further support or action (e.g., Executive Committee, Child Safety Officer, or external agencies).
- Promoting awareness of the Centre's integrity, member protection, and child safeguarding policies.

9.2 Scope of the MPIO Role:

- The MPIO **does not investigate complaints** or make decisions about disciplinary outcomes.
- The MPIO **does not act as an advocate** for any party, but instead supports fair and respectful handling of all issues raised.
- The MPIO may be consulted by the Executive Committee for input on complaints involving member protection concerns.

9.3 Confidentiality and Impartiality:

- The MPIO provides a safe, non-judgmental space for individuals to discuss their concerns confidentially.
- All discussions with the MPIO are handled discreetly and respectfully, in line with EDLAC's privacy and integrity standards.

9.4 Accessibility of the MPIO:

- The name and contact information of the current MPIO will be published on the EDLAC website and noticeboard.
- Members are encouraged to speak to the MPIO if they feel unsafe, unsure, or need clarification about any behaviour or situation that may fall under the Integrity Framework.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

Approved by: EDLAC Committee **Effective Date:** 29/07/2025

Review Date: 24/05/2026