



Complaints Policy

Introduction

This document sets out the procedures for complaints, adjudication, remedies and appeals for Sailing in Dublin Club – (SID). It is important to note that complaints involving statutory bodies should not be handled by the club, e.g. Gardai in the event of alleged assault / criminal offence. In such cases, the person making the complaint should be advised to report the issue to the appropriate authority in the first instance.

SID is an adult only club, i.e. over 18 years of age, and as such members should show respect to other members involving any activity of the club. All activities are carried out on a voluntary basis.

Complaints may concern inappropriate behaviour or disrespect towards members (including bullying), reckless or unsafe behaviour, failure to observe safety protocols, or lack of necessary sailing competence or judgement, and may extend to other matters as deemed appropriate.

Procedure for dealing with complaints

SID will operate on the basis of good practice which involves a complaints/appeals procedure as follows:

1. A complaint may be made to any officer (member of the Club Committee).
2. In order to progress, the complaint must be put in writing.
3. It should be brought to the attention of the Club Chairperson unless it concerns that officer, in which case it should be discussed by the committee as a whole.
4. The Chair (or another officer designated by the Committee) will attempt to resolve the complaint by mediation within ten working days of the complaint being put in writing.
5. If appropriate, the name of the complainant will not be divulged to the subject of the complaint at this stage, in a similar way to a 'protected disclosure'.
6. If step 4 fails, the club committee will appoint a Complaint Committee of three or five Club members, chaired by an officer of the Club, with at least two other members being peers of the person complained against (whether crew, vice-captain or captain). No members of this committee will be involved in the complaint.

7. The Complaint Committee will first determine whether the complaint is valid (falls within the rules or guiding principles of the Club).
8. If valid, the Complaint Committee will provide the written complaint to the subject, and invite them to respond either in writing or in person at a meeting with the committee, at the subject's choice, ideally this response should be within 10 working days. If the complainant is willing, they may be identified at this stage, otherwise the complaint committee shall endeavour to redact the complaint so that the specific identity of the complainant is not disclosed but the subject matter of the complaint is retained.
9. The Complaint Committee may seek information from witnesses and review any paperwork relevant to the complaint. The subject of the complaint shall be entitled to copies of any witness statements and shall be entitled to submit a further response to same.
10. The Complaint Committee will consider the complaint and the response, make a finding on the facts, and decide any remedy, sanctions or resolution within 25 working days of the original written complaint.
11. The Complaint Committee should attempt to reach consensus, but will otherwise make its recommendation by majority, with the minority view also recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
12. If it is discovered that a complaint involves a suspected criminal offence the designated person from the committee should disband the Complaint Committee. The person making the complaint should be advised to report the issue to the appropriate authority in the first instance
12. The Complaint committee, as soon as possible, should inform the club committee of the progress of the disciplinary process.
13. The Complaint Committee should immediately notify the complainant and the subject of its findings and recommendations.
14. Written records of all complaints should be safely and confidentially kept in compliance with GDPR. Club procedures should be defined for the retention of such records in the event of election of new officers.

Appeals Procedure

If the complainant or the member against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the Complaint Committee, she/he has the right to appeal the decision to an appeals committee composed of three officers (Club committee members) who have not been members of the original Complaint Committee.

Any appeal should be made in writing within 15 working days of the decision of the Complaint committee. The appeal will be against the decision of the Complaints Committee based on the original complaint and not any additional issues.

The appeals committee should have the power to confirm, set aside or change any remedy or sanction imposed by the Complaint committee.

All matters relating to complaints will be kept confidential between the complainant, those involved in the Complaint committee and the Sid committee, unless that committee deem it necessary to inform the wider membership.