

# **Irish Amateur Weightlifting Association**

*Cumann Amaiteireach Togail Mheachaine na h-Eireann*

Trading as

***Weightlifting Ireland***

**(Affiliated to the International Weightlifting Federation)**

## **Complaints Procedure**

The Irish Amateur Weightlifting association (I.A.W.L.A.) is dedicated to promoting and developing the sport of Weightlifting through Fair play and ethical practice.



**20 Raymond Street, South Circular Road, Dublin 8**

**Phone: 00 353 1 4541750 Fax: 00 353 1 4547231**

**e-mail: [secretary@weightliftingireland.com](mailto:secretary@weightliftingireland.com)**

**Company Registration Number: 189903.**

## Table of Contents

<b>Article 1 - Scope</b> .....	4
1.1 Scope and Remit .....	4
1.2 Areas covered.....	4
<b>Article 2 Quality Assurance</b> .....	4
2.1 continuation .....	4
<b>Article 3 In Competition</b> .....	4
3.1 Decisions of the Referee .....	4
3.2 Role of the Technical Officer .....	4
3.3 Complaints towards the Technical officer .....	4
3.4 Treatment of Individuals in the Competition environment .....	4
<b>Article 4 Reporting of the Board</b> .....	5
4.1 Annual Reports.....	5
4.2 Development .....	5
4.3 Handbook .....	5
4.4 Disciplinary of Board Members .....	5
<b>Article 5 Complaints about events and Services</b> .....	5
5.1 Nature of complaints .....	5
5.2 Escalation .....	5
5.3 Coordinator appointment .....	5
5.4 communication 1.....	5
5.5 communication 2.....	5
5.6 communication 3 .....	5
5.7 Complaints against the Board .....	5
<b>Article 6 Suggestions</b> .....	6
6.1 Reporting.....	6
6.2 Response .....	6
<b>Article 7 Grievances</b> .....	6
7.1 Causation .....	6
7.2 procedure.....	6
7.3 Organisation of hearings .....	6
7.4 Minute taking .....	6
7.5 Timescale .....	6

7.6 Informal resolution..... 6

**Article 8 Whistle Blowing** ..... 7

8.1 Intent ..... 7

8.2 Sample Criteria ..... 7

8.3 Contact with relevant authorities ..... 7

8.4 confidentiality ..... 7

8.5 Freedom from unfair treatment..... 7

## **1. Scope**

1.1 The following procedures have been set out to augment our current ethics policy by providing ways to handle complaints, suggestions, grievances and whistle-blowing irrespective of origin.

1.2 These procedures adopt the following definitions:

- 1.2.1 Complaints are expressions of dissatisfaction which might be remedied or improved.
- 1.2.2 Suggestions are ideas for improvement.
- 1.2.3 Grievances are concerns particularly of employees or volunteer officials with their treatment in connection with their appointment.
- 1.2.4 Whistle blowing is the confidential disclosure of concerns in the public interest.

## **2. Quality Assurance**

2.1 In order to implement and improve our quality procedures, Weightlifting Ireland actively implements lessons learnt and as such takes all matters of complaints, grievance and reporting seriously, and will provide resolution in line with our ethics policies and procedures.

## **3. In Competition**

3.1 Referees' decisions on the day are final, with the exception of disqualification of a competitor after the event, for example after drug testing. Otherwise decisions on passing lifts, timing out, dress etc. are in the hands of the officials of the day, with no later appeal possible, based on the recommendations of the technical officer.

3.2 All complaints must be made on the day as soon as possible to the Technical Officer in accordance with the standards as set in the Ethics Policy. The Technical Officer shall seek to resolve them on the day and shall report to the appropriate authority.

3.3 Complaints about the judgment or conduct of the Technical Officer should be referred to the Board of Directors in writing, with full details as to the nature of the complaint within 14 days.

3.4 As per the regulations of the ethics policy, all persons must be treated with respect; as such no grievances should be aired in the public forum of the competition venue, but instead referred to the board of directors.

#### **4. Reporting of the Board**

- 4.1 Directors will present Annual Reports to the membership with proposals aimed at improving the quality processes of the association.
- 4.2 Directors shall facilitate in the development of specialist areas, e.g. courses, schools, newsletter, referees, etc.
- 4.3 The handbook including procedures and guidelines will be maintained for all activities.
- 4.4 The Board shall be accountable and include procedures for disciplinary action against the board where there is reasonable grounds to suspect a breach of stated procedure.

#### **5. Complaints about events and services**

- 5.1 Complaints should be made in the first instance directly to the person in charge or the person delivering the service. That person should respond positively in dealing with the issue on the spot as far as practicable and in reporting potential for improvement to the relevant administrator.
- 5.2 Where the direct approach of 5.1 fails, or where the complainant wishes, the complaint should be made in writing within two weeks to the Board of Directors.
- 5.3 The board shall then immediately appoint a Coordinator who need not be a board member for the particular complaint, who was not directly involved with the circumstances of the original complaint, as well as confirm receipt thereof.
- 5.4 The Board shall also, within one week of receiving the complaint, copy it to the Coordinator, to the officials against whom it is made and to other officials present where appropriate, asking for their comments to be sent to the Coordinator within a further week. Allowance may be made for holidays or other suitable mitigating circumstances.
- 5.5 The Coordinator shall collect all the responses and copy them to the complainant for any final comment within a further week.
- 5.6 The Coordinator shall then consider all the responses together and shall produce a short Report giving a view on whether the complaint is justified, advice to the complainant or officials, and improvements for the future. If disciplinary action is recommended, or if the complainant is not satisfied, the complaint will be referred to the Board of directors.
- 5.7 Complaints against the Board should be referred to the governance director, who will act as Coordinator, or if directly involved with the complaint will appoint an independent arbitrator to act on the boards behalf, such as an agreed person from the nominations of 3 respective parties from each of

- i. the complainant
- ii. the party against whom the complaint has been made
- iii. the board of directors.

## **6. Suggestions**

6.1 Suggestions may be made on the spot, and if not accommodated directly may be reported to the Board who will appoint a Coordinator, in parallel with paragraphs 5.1 to 5.3 above

6.2 The Coordinator will then consult with appropriate personnel to determine the viability of the suggestion and report back to the proposer as to the decision of the board.

## **7. Grievances**

7.1 Grievances may arise from alleged breaches of the codes of conduct, policies and procedures under which all members are required to operate. Once problems have been raised they should be settled quickly with all due diligence used in the seeking of a resolution.

7.2 If the matter cannot be resolved between the individuals involved informally, it should be discussed and brought to the attention of the board of directors for redress. The Governance director will be the final arbiter. In formal grievance meetings the individual may be accompanied by a member or previously authorised non member of the association where no member can be provided.

7.3 All reasonable endeavour should be made to ensure a mutually suitable date, time and venue

7.4 At each stage of discussion clear minutes and maintained record of correspondence should be kept and distributed to involved parties.

7.5 At each stage a time limit should be agreed for follow-up or further discussion. This will minimise delay if further information needs to be obtained, or if action depends on others not yet involved.

7.6 As the aim of the procedure is to resolve any grievance informally, rapidly and confidentially, no record of discussions need be brought to the board unless so requested by either party, and under reasonable grounds.

## **8. Whistle-blowing**

8.1 These procedures are to provide for any person to report serious breaches of the codes of conduct and procedures, or suspicion of it, in confidence without fear of harassment or victimisation;

8.1.1 For the purpose of these reporting, this may include suspicion of:

8.1.1.1 fraud or financial irregularity;

8.1.1.2 corruption, bribery or blackmail;

8.1.1.3 criminal offences;

8.1.1.4 breach of legal or regulatory requirements;

8.1.1.5 harassment, bullying, victimisation or child abuse;

8.1.1.6 endangering health, safety or the environment;

8.1.1.7 miscarriage of justice;

8.1.1.8 The deliberate concealment of evidence in connection with the above.

8.1.1.9 Or any other action that can be objectively viewed as in breach of one or more of the Weightlifting Ireland codes of practice, policies or procedures.

8.2 Where a matter cannot be dealt with through standard procedures, it may be reported in confidence to any one of the board of directors, stating the grounds for the suspicions of malpractice who will proceed with standard procedures as detailed in the ethics policy.

8.3 If the Discloser is not satisfied with the outcome, the Discloser may, after informing the Coordinator, raise the matter with the appropriate personnel or the police. Alternatively, if warranted by exceptional circumstances or suspicion of involvement of all of the Board, the Discloser may in the first instance report the matter externally in confidence to a relevant authority, lawyer or the police.

8.4 The Board shall take all reasonable care to protect the confidentiality of the Discloser. The Discloser is also under obligation to respect confidentiality in respect of any unproven allegation.

8.5 No disciplinary action will be taken against the Discloser on the grounds of making a disclosure in accordance with these procedures, unless there is good reason to believe it was made maliciously or vexatiously. The Discloser may report any perceived consequent detriment through the complaints procedures or through these whistle blowing procedures.