



**H.Y.C.**

## **Hollywood Yacht Club Complaints Procedure**

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### **Introduction**

Pursuant to its powers to make byelaws and regulations for the management of the affairs of the Hollywood Yacht Club ("the Club") the Committee has adopted this procedure for the handling of complaints within the Club.

It is the Club's intention and hope is that everyone will be able to participate in its activities in a spirit of mutual co-operation and enjoyment. However, it is inevitable that, on occasion, concerns may arise that require investigation.

It is expected that most of these concerns will be dealt with quickly and courteously and in an informal way by a Committee member.

However, it is possible that a complaint may arise that requires a formal investigation and response.

The aim of this Procedure is to provide a fair and open process for dealing with concerns and complaints raised by members and non-members that directly affect them or their children in the Club.

This procedure does not cover complaints concerning child protection. Such complaints fall to be dealt with by the Club's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines. If, in the opinion of the Committee member or officer to whom a complaint is made considers that it should be dealt with under the Club's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines he or she shall promptly discuss this with the Club's designated Child Protection Officer and/or the RYA Child protection Co-ordinator and, if appropriate, transfer the complaint to their care.

For the avoidance of doubt this procedure does cover broader issues of child welfare which do not amount to potential abuse (see Appendix A to the Club's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines).

It should also be noted that issues concerning the application of racing rules fall outside the scope of this procedure and will be dealt with by the Officer of the Day or relevant Protest Committee, applying the rules relevant to the race or event in question.

## **What kind of complaints does the Club deal with?**

The Club accepts complaints about how members or others using the Club's premises or engaging in Club activities have been treated by the Club.

## **How are complaints made?**

The first step is to approach the Committee member with responsibility for activity in question. If the complaint concerns that Committee member, a more general issue, one which affects more than one area of activity or in case of doubt the complainant should contact the Commodore or the Club Secretary. These Committee members or officers will receive the complaint and refer it to the Committee.

To be accepted as a valid complaint:

- it must be raised within one month of the complainant knowing the facts or being in a position to establish them. This is to ensure complaints can be investigated when the facts can still be established accurately and in the interests of certainty.
- it must be raised in writing giving sufficient detail of the grounds of complaint and the relevant factual background.
- it, generally, must not be raised anonymously.
- it must not be raised on behalf of or regarding other people, unless by parents/Carers of children or where for some other proper reason it is not practicable for the other person to raise it personally.
- it must not be broadly or substantively the same as a previous complaint.
- it must not have been raised or progressed unreasonably, vexatiously or maliciously.

## **Who deals with complaints?**

Complaints will be dealt with at the direction of the Committee – either by a panel of Committee members or a designated Committee member or Club Officer. That body or person will investigate the complaint and reach a decision on it.

## **How are complaints dealt with?**

Complaints are to be dealt with fairly and objectively. The Club will endeavour to handle complaints in a positive and pro-active manner and aims to resolve any issues as quickly as it can. However, it should be borne in mind that Committee members and officers are all volunteers giving of their own free time and therefore it may take a little longer than would otherwise be the case to sort out your complaint.

Complainants will receive an acknowledgement of a formal complaint and be kept informed, as is reasonable and appropriate, of the progress of the complaint.

The body or person investigating the complaint may, as it determines, need to speak to the complainant and any other relevant persons so as to fully understand the complaint and the circumstances surrounding it.

The body or person investigating the complaint will make a decision about the complaint and will inform the complainant and the Committee as to whether or not the complaint is upheld and any actions that will be taken as a result.

Decisions involving the proposed suspension or expulsion of a Club member must be referred to the full Committee as only it has the authority to impose such a sanction. In such a case Club Rules 33 and 34 shall be observed.

### **What if a complainant is not happy with the outcome of his or her complaint?**

If after receiving a response to his or her complaint the complainant is of the view that it was not handled appropriately, or considers that he or she has not had a satisfactory answer, then the complainant may appeal.

Appeals must be made within two weeks of the complainant being given the outcome of his or her complaint. The appeal must be made in writing and must be sent to the Club Secretary. It must set out what decisions are being appealed against, on what grounds and the preferred outcome sought to resolve the issue(s).

The appeal will be considered by the full Committee, excluding any members or officers who participated in the initial investigation and decision. Again, and at the discretion of the Committee, it may need to speak to the appellant and such other people, as it thinks necessary, to fully understand the appeal and the circumstances surrounding the investigation of he appeal.

The Committee will make a decision about the appeal and will inform the appellant as to whether or not his or her appeal is upheld and any actions that will be taken as a result.

At this point the matter will be closed and no further appeal or review will be possible.

An appeal against a decision to suspend or expel a member is handled differently as such an appeal is to a special general meeting of the Club members, in conformity with the provisions of Club Rule 34.

### **Further information**

If you require clarification or require advice on how to make a complaint, please contact the Club Secretary

### **Dissemination**

This Procedure shall be displayed on the Club notice-board and made accessible on its website.