

WEYMOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

SANCTIONS POLICY



DOCUMENT CONTROL

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WFC-DIS-SAP-01	2.0	To be Ratified	Annual

INTRODUCTION

Weymouth FC is committed to providing an environment in which everyone is able to enjoy watching football across the Men's, Women's and Youth Teams.

Cautions, temporary or full club banning orders are dependent on the infringement and whether a supporter has been subject to a disciplinary process before. In instances whereby banning orders and suspensions have to be issued, the below information can be used as guidance for how and when they may occur. The policy must be applied fairly, equally, and consistently to all person's irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

These sanctions are a guidance document only. The Club retains discretion to impose alternative sanctions depending on the circumstances. Sanctions are independent of any other investigation and/or sanctions that may be imposed by third parties. Where appropriate the Club may provide relevant details to the Police or other relevant authorities. The Club reserves the right to change this guide without prior notice. In the event that any changes are made, the revised guide will be updated through uptheterras.co.uk.

INVESTIGATION PROCESS / REFERRAL TO INCIDENT'S PANEL

If an allegation is made against a supporter of breaching Weymouth FC's rules and regulations, the supporter will be notified of the allegation in writing (or if necessary and appropriate, another means of communication) and asked for their own observations regarding the allegation. In addition, the club may communicate with other supporters/staff/police to build a comprehensive picture of the alleged incident and review any CCTV. If the alleged incident is one that may lead to a club ban, then it may be necessary to invoke a temporary ban of their season ticket and/or ability to purchase home/ away/cup tickets for any AFC Bournemouth team whilst the investigation process is undertaken. The decision to utilise a temporary ban, rests with the Chairman.

Any offences shown within the matrix will be referred to the Incidents Panel who will normally consist of:

- Chairman (Chair)

- Finance Director
- Supporters Association Representative
- Safety Team Representative
- Dorset Police Representative

The incidents panel will normally convene regularly during the season and all meetings are recorded by the Management Team. The details of any incident along with supporting evidence will be presented to the panel and a decision re guilt will be made via a majority verdict. In the event of no majority verdict being reached, the Chair will make the final decision. Weymouth FC has set the burden of proof for incidents reported to the panel as being 'on balance of probabilities.' This means the panel must be satisfied that the alleged incident is more likely than not to have occurred.

Where appropriate, other relevant representatives may be invited onto the Incidents Panel. In addition, and where necessary, the supporter in question may be invited into a meeting with representatives of the Incidents Panel, relevant representatives will be decided by the subject of the report. Anyone under the age of 18 or deemed to be an adult at risk, must be accompanied by an appropriate adult.

A letter will be sent within 14 working days of the incident panel meeting, informing the supporter of the panel's decision.

FAN EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR CONTRACT

Where supporters are involved in an equality and diversity related incident or where supporters are young or involved in their first recorded incident, the fan education programme will be considered. Participation in this process may reduce or remove the need to impose a suspension/ban. (see appendix 1)

As a follow up from a fan education programme, an Acceptable Behaviour Contract is an agreement made between the club and a supporter which outlines specific measures the supporter will agree to abide by.

The contract sets out the consequences for breaching the contract, length of the contract and a date for review. (see appendix 2)

Any supporters who have been under a Football Banning Order (FBO) will be required to complete an Acceptable Behaviour Contract on expiration of the FBO and prior to their return.

Fan Education Sessions and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts will only be delivered once the supporter's right to appeal has expired or, the appeals process has been completed.

APPEAL PROCESS

Following an offence, the incident panel will determine the sanction to be imposed, in line with this policy, and will communicate this sanction in writing to the relevant individual. The individual will have 14 days to appeal the decision, a sanction will be eligible for an appeal where additional and relevant supporting information is provided that the incident panel were not aware of at the time of issuing the sanction. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the chair of the Incident Panel via office@weymouthfootballclub.co.uk the appeal must include details of the additional supporting information.

Supporters will receive communication from the club, acknowledging receipt of their appeal within 5 working days. Appeals that are considered will be referred to the Appeals Panel which will consist of;

- A member of the clubs Senior Management Team - A member of WFC Staff

Both members will be independent of the panel and the reported incident. The Appeals Panel will notify the individual in writing, the outcome of the appeal within 14 working days of the appeal being acknowledged. The Appeals Panel has the ability to increase, decrease or withdraw the original sanction. Their judgement as to the process and sanction applied will be final at this point. If the individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they should refer to the Independent Football Ombudsman.

If a case is referred to the Independent Football Ombudsman (IFO) and recommendations are made through a formal adjudication, the club will communicate with the supporter within 14 days of the the final adjudication document being received by both parties. Any recommendation made by the IFO will be considered by the club's incident panel and a decision regarding amendment to the supporter sanction will be communicated with the supporter.

Where supporters have been issued an indefinite club ban, this will be subject to a review at stated intervals. This information will be communicated with the clubs decision to issue the ban. At any point through the process, if an individual has a complaint - not involving the decision of the incidents panel or hearing, the individual has the right to refer to Weymouth FC's Complaints policy and procedures.

It is important to note that if the appeals panel are considering a case that is complex in its nature, there may be recourse for more time to be taken. In this event, the individual will be contacted within the 14 working days, advising them of the additional length of time.

Incidents that take place within the footprint or in the vicinity of, another football stadium may be treated with additional seriousness due to impact on the clubs' reputation, away allocation, kick-off days/times and stewarding.

Previous offences will be taken into account by the panel as an aggravating factor where they have taken place within the past 3 years. Where incidents take place away from the stadium in which Weymouth FC are playing, they will be considered as sanctionable offences in the event that they involve a person with a Weymouth FC supporter account and/or are in possession of a ticket to the game in which Weymouth FC are playing and, are involved in an incident which;

- Occurs either 2 hours before kick-off or 1 hour after the final whistle
- Occurs within a mile of the vicinity of the stadium
- Occurs whilst travelling on official club transport

The club retains the right to issue both an indefinite club ban and a lifetime ban. These will only be implemented in the most serious of cases. An indefinite club ban will be subject to a review at periodic intervals whereas a lifetime ban will have no review process other than the right to an initial appeal.

Whilst the club retains the right to issue both of these sanctions, it is important to note that the club places importance on education and rehabilitation. These sanctions would only be

used in the event that the club has exhausted all other sanctioning avenues or the offence is so serious in nature that these measures would not be appropriate.

Where supporters are involved in criminal activity at grassroots/non-league football which is reported to the club by an external agency. They will be invited to take part in a fan education session and complete an Acceptable Behaviour Contract which will be delivered by Weymouth FC and Dorset Police.

Offence	1 st Incident	2 nd Incident	3 rd Incident
Level 1 Drunkenness in and around the stadium Smoking/Vaping in the stadium Failure to comply with the instructions of a club steward or security officer	Written warning	Minimum 3 game suspension and/or ABC/ Education Session	Minimum 3 game suspension and/or ABC/ Education Session
Level 2 Abusive, foul or aggressive language/behaviour in person or online Damaging property or disorderly behaviour Use of any prohibited item(s)	Written Warning or 1-6 game suspension and/or ABC/ Education Session	6-10 game suspension	Minimum 10 game suspension
Level 3 Selling or transferring tickets in a method not authorised by the club Purchasing or utilising the incorrect ticket without meeting the qualifying criteria Association with supporter ticketing accounts banned or under investigation following suspicious activity or violation of Ticketing T&C's	Written Warning or 1-10 game suspension. Potential loss of all Cherries Points/Potential Loss of Season Ticket.	10 game to 3-year suspension. Potential loss of all Cherries Points/Potential Loss of Season Ticket	3-Year to Indefinite Club ban. Potential loss of all Cherries Points/Potential Loss of Season Ticket.
Level 4 Missile Throwing	Indefinite suspension, pending investigation. Open sanction, to be decided by the panel		

Pitch encroachment (actual or intended) Discriminatory language or behaviour (including sexual harassment) Use or possession of 'pyrotechnics' Breaching a Club ban or ABC	
Level 5 Abusive or aggressive language or behaviour towards Weymouth Staff, Police or anyone else in a working capacity in person or online b) Any other criminal activity	Indefinite suspension, pending investigation. Open sanction, to be decided by the panel
Other sanction at a home or away match, any other offence, Police or a breach of applicable T&C's, Supporters Code of Conduct, or ground regulations.	Reviewed on an individual basis

APPENDIX A: DISCRIMINATION AND ABUSE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The education programme is in place to offer an alternative solution in response to an EDI incident or a low level first offence within the Club. Predominantly this is targeted at supporters however, the programme can be adapted to be delivered to staff members involved in EDI incident.

The education programme has been designed to incorporate Weymouth FC staff, supporters and members from relevant local community groups who will be vitally important in providing knowledge and learning allowing those involved to thoroughly understand the impact of discrimination/abusive language and behaviour. All sessions will be facilitated by a relevant member of WFC staff alongside someone with lived experience within the protected characteristic group.

- Sessions will be delivered as follows:
- Between 1 and 3, 30-minute sessions with Head of EDI and Engagement and relevant member/s of staff.
- Delivered online or in person at the Bob Lucas stadium.
- Involvement from relevant person with lived experience (further details below)
- Follow up report (from Head of EDI and Engagement) and where appropriate, personal statement (from supporter) to be made on completion of programme.
- The nature of the incident the supporter has been involved in will shape the sessions, attention will be paid to whether the incident took place in person or online and the type of discrimination; direct, indirect, harassment or victimisation.
- Sessions will follow the following format:
- Session 1 – Focus on understanding Equality Act, Protected Characteristics, Discrimination
- Session 2 – Focus on specific type of discrimination that the supporter was involved with, education around the topic
- Session 3 – Opportunity for Q&A with person involved with relevant protected characteristic group

Where relevant, supporters who take part in the education sessions will be invited to complete a short training course through Kick It Outs academy as part of their learning on the topic. (<https://theacademy.kickitout.org/>)

Protected Characteristics

Due diligence will be carried out to ensure those with lived experience, involved in the sessions from Club, Community Sports Trust and supporter groups are protected and do not have any conflict of interest with the supporter. This will create an assurance that their inclusion is relevant, and they do not have any connection to the supporter involved in the fan education programme.

Racism

Sessions will involve a member of staff from Weymouth FC or its CIC with relevant lived experience. Where necessary and appropriate, sessions will involve a representative from Kick It Out who will support delivery.

Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and Gender Reassignment

Sessions will involve a representative from Weymouth FC 's LGBTQ+ supporters Proud Terras who will reference their lived experience to provide insight into the impact of discrimination/abuse of this nature.

Disability abuse / discrimination

Sessions will involve a representative from Weymouth FC's Disabled Supporters Association (DSA) who will reference and share knowledge of their own lived experience to provide insight into the impact of discrimination/abuse of this nature.

Religious Abuse

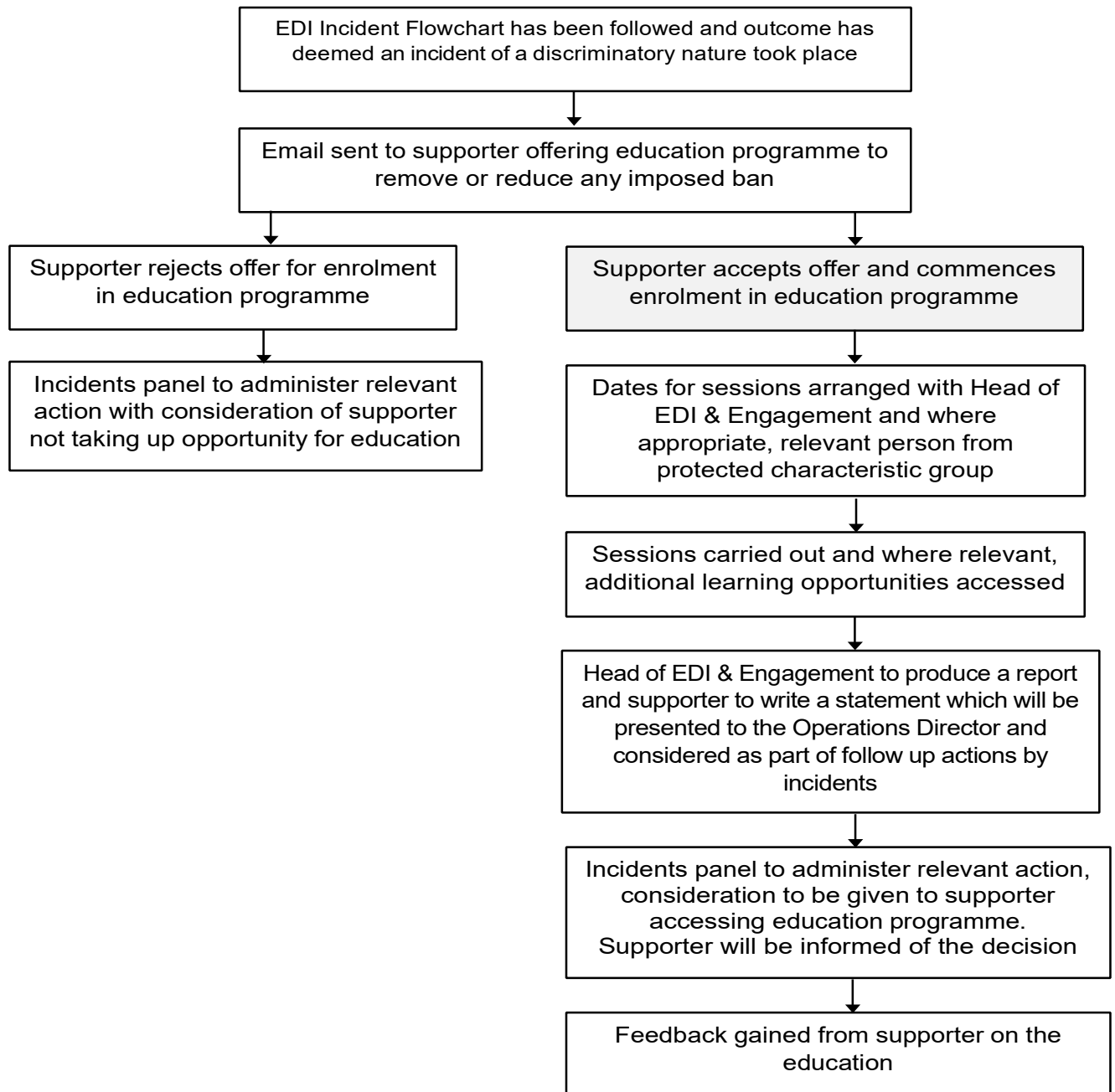
Weymouth FC works in close connection with a wide range of Religious groups and sessions will involve a representative from the relevant Religious group. This person will be able to share their own lived experience

Sexism

Sessions will involve Weymouth FC 's Her Game Too ambassador who will attend sessions and will reference and share knowledge of their own lived experience to provide insight into the impact of sexism.

Ageism

Sessions will involve a member of Weymouth FC's Equality Focus group and a member of staff from Weymouth FC or its CIC.



APPENDIX B: ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR CONTRACT

This Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) is made on:

Between:

1. Weymouth FC (The Club)
2. _____ (The supporter)

The terms of this club conduct contract end on _____ unless certain circumstances change and will be reviewed in _____.

The club is willing to reinstate the supporter's attendance on the condition that the supporter agrees, whilst attending any match in which Weymouth FC participates (including, but not limited to, home and away matches for any of its teams, matches played at neutral venues and when travelling to and from such matches) to abide by the following conditions:

- I will respect and abide by the rules and ground regulations of the Bob Lucas Stadium or of any away ground where Weymouth FC will be playing.
- I will not engage in or encourage any behaviour that is deemed to be unacceptable or discriminatory this will be at the Club's absolute discretion.
- I will not become involved in any anti-social behaviour or behaviour that is likely to cause anti-social behaviour at the Bob Lucas Stadium or any location where Weymouth FC will be playing.
- I will not be in possession of or under the influence of prohibited or illegal substances at the Bob Lucas Stadium or any location where Weymouth FC will be playing.

If the supporter is under investigation by any other associated organisation, i.e. the Police, British Transport Police, another football club, Weymouth FC reserves the right to suspend attendance (as defined above) until such time as that investigation is complete.

Failure to comply with the terms of this agreement may result in the withdrawal or cancellation of the supporter's season ticket, other matchday tickets and/or the withdrawal of any other rights the supporter may have in relation to purchasing tickets and/ or attending matches in which the club participates. In such circumstances, the club reserves the right, and the supporter gives their permission, to make any report (including sharing details of the existence and content of this Contract) to Dorset Police, British Transport Police and/or any other relevant Police authority as it deems appropriate in the circumstances for the purposes of event security, public comfort and safety or the prevention or detection of crime (or suspected crime).

DECLARATION

By signing, I confirm that I acknowledge and agree to the terms of this contract, and I understand the consequences in breaching this contract.

Signed:

Witnessed by:

Print Name:

Print Name:

Date:

DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY (VERSION CONTROL LOG)

This log tracking table details all historical amendments, authorization mandates, and iterations of this risk documentation framework.

Ver.	Release Date	Author / Role	Primary Changes Summary	Authorized Sign-off
1.0	04/08/2017	Paul Maitland	Initial document drafting and implementation across all teams.	Board approved
2.0	18/09/2026	Compliance Officer	Added Version Control, Reference and page number, club colour and font with updated logo	Awaiting Board Sign Off