



Badminton Wellington – Complaints Policy

Values

Badminton Wellington knows everyone involved in badminton is here because of a shared passion for badminton and care for the people involved.

When people involved in badminton get into disagreements it can become a serious issue.

Badminton Wellington is committed to supporting everyone, including participants, coaches, volunteers, whānau and supporters to participate in an environment that is respectful, safe, and fair.

Badminton Wellington acknowledges it is important to everyone involved to respond quickly, fairly and thoughtfully to address issues. People are entitled to raise concerns or complaints and to have them addressed promptly and fairly. No one should be punished or victimised for raising a concern or a complaint in good faith.

This policy is centred on equity, dignity, respect and maximising the potential of all people in badminton. The following principles should be kept in mind when applying it:

- Respect for the culture(s) of the people involved including having culturally appropriate processes to resolve complaints and restore relationships.
- Addressing problems informally and face to face, wherever possible
- Treating others fairly, equally
- Maintaining relationships and keeping each other safe

Purpose

This policy sets out the steps for raising and dealing with concerns and complaints. It aims to:

- support people to resolve minor issues on their own
- give clear guidance for making, dealing with and resolving complaints
- make sure the approach taken to dealing with complaints is fair and consistent including enabling culturally appropriate responses and processes.

Application

Who can make a complaint?

Complaints can be made by or about anyone involved in Badminton Wellington. This includes: volunteers, participants, supporters, club members, employees, service providers, and families/whānau of participants. Complaints may also be about the committee of Badminton Wellington.

What can complaints be about?

Complaints may be made about things such as actions or decisions of organisation members or officials, processes not being managed well (or at all), disagreements between members, unprofessional or upsetting behaviour, or delays or failure to communicate about matters affecting a person.

Complaints may involve:

- organisation management issues
- conflicts of interest (including favouritism)
- off-field unsporting behaviour
- disrespectful behaviour
- bullying (see below)
- sexual harassment (see below)
- discrimination
- abuse of power
- health and safety risks
- offensive/insulting language or behaviour.



This complaints process does not apply to code-specific in-play decisions, or selection or eligibility decisions. Serious complaints (e.g. unethical, dishonest or illegal behaviour, harassment (sexual, racial or otherwise) bullying, health and safety risks, unlawful discrimination, and offensive/insulting language or behaviour) may be breaches of other Badminton Wellington policies, e.g. Disciplinary Procedure and Appeals Policy or similar. These will be assessed and may be dealt with under those other policies.

If you are unsure whether the Complaints Policy and Process applies to your situation, the Committee or General Manager can provide guidance.

Guidance and support can also be sought from the Sport and Recreation Complaints and Mediation Service (“SRCMS”). The SRCMS is an impartial organisation independent of Badminton Wellington and will keep details of complaints confidential unless and until the complainant wishes otherwise

The SRCMS complements the complaints policies and processes of Badminton Wellington and is a resource available free of charge to assist people to raise and resolve complaints.

Informal resolution first

People are encouraged where possible to raise concerns directly with the person who has behaved in a way causing concern. It can be helpful to discuss the issue with a trusted friend or family member for another point of view and support before raising the concern directly with the person.

Self-managed informal resolution needs to be approached respectfully. The parties involved should have a chance to be heard and feel safe to be able to say what they want to say, keeping in mind the need to find ways to resolve issues and be able to work with one another in future. It is open to any party to have a support person involved. A support person might assist, for example, in raising the complaint with the person initially or joining a conversation between the parties.

Sometimes it is not possible to raise the concern directly, for example (a) there are safety reasons or (b) the issue is too serious to try to resolve this way or (c) the complainant wishes to remain anonymous. In these situations, people are encouraged to contact the SRCMS for guidance in raising the complaint. The SRCMS can also discuss with you issues such as anonymity and practical considerations in raising complaints.

If self-managed informal resolution has not resolved the issue, it should next be raised with:

- the Badminton Wellington Committee, who, in consultation with those involved, will suggest a culturally appropriate process to try to resolve it. This may include holding a facilitated meeting or following a process that meets the needs of the people involved; or
- the SRCMS, which can provide the individuals involved and committee with:
 - guidance to move the issue forward to a constructive process; and
 - access to SRCMS facilitators and/or mediators should the parties wish to have a facilitated discussion.

Formal complaints resolution – advice to those with a complaint

What do I need to do?

Formal complaints should be made in writing, as soon as possible after the event(s). If you can, please use the attached Complaints Form. Where this is not possible, you can make a verbal complaint and Badminton Wellington will assist you to put it in writing.



Who do I make the complaint to?

You have a choice. Complaints may be made directly to the Committee or to the SRCMS.

The SRCMS is a good option where:

- it would be helpful to talk to someone in confidence before making the complaint about how best to go about it and what to expect;
- you wish to remain anonymous;
- there is a dispute between people that is escalating or causing problems within badminton;
- the committee or official that the complaint would usually be made to is involved in the issue or has a conflict of interest;
- the complaint is serious or urgent in nature;
- it will be important for either or both the complainant or person complained of to have the matter resolved through a culturally appropriate process; or
- it would assist for one or more parties to have access to free and confidential counselling services.

If you contact the SRCMS for initial advice and wish to proceed with a complaint, you are free to move forward with the SRCMS or make it directly to Badminton Wellington.

If you choose to move forward with the SRCMS, any complaint can be made directly to it by phone or in writing. For contact details see <https://www.sportsmediationservice.org.nz>

How will I be treated?

A person making a formal complaint to Badminton Wellington can expect to be treated in line with the following principles:

Fairness: Every person dealing with a complaint will remain neutral and listen to both sides of the story.

Respect: Every person involved in a complaint will be treated and is expected to act towards others with respect, dignity and in a culturally appropriate way. Complaints will be raised and handled sensitively, with a goal to preserve relationships by acknowledging each other's role and contribution to badminton.

Communication: Every person involved in a complaint will be regularly kept up to date on progress and the outcome.

Confidentiality: Information relating to a complaint will not be shared with any other person without consent, unless fair process or the law require the information to be shared with a person or an authority. This will be discussed with the person providing the information.

Restoration: The goal is to resolve so far as possible the particular complaint to the satisfaction of all parties, restore people's mana and maintain positive relationships within the organisation and across the badminton and wider community.

Acknowledgement: Every person admitting fault or found to be at fault after a fair process will be asked to acknowledge their fault to those harmed, acknowledge the harm and provide an apology.

Support: Both the person making the complaint and person complained about should have access to support throughout a complaint process. Everyone involved in a process may be accompanied by chosen family/whānau and/or other support people. Any person may obtain independent legal advice or representation at any stage (at their expense).

What is the process for Badminton Wellington resolving a complaint?

For complaints made directly to it, Badminton Wellington will promptly acknowledge receipt.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, Badminton Wellington will contact the complainant to discuss the next steps, support and any child welfare, wellbeing or safety concerns the complainant has.

Badminton Wellington will inform the complainant that the complaint (and relevant information) will be shared with individuals within the organisation who are responsible for addressing the complaint and the person or organisation complained about.



If the complainant is not willing to have their complaint or identity shared with the person complained about, Badminton Wellington will advise that the complaint may not be capable of resolution to the complainant's satisfaction. In these circumstances, Badminton Wellington will suggest referral of the complaint to the SRCMS to act as an intermediary.

If the complainant is under 18, Badminton Wellington will generally encourage the complainant to notify their parent/guardian and have a parent/guardian involved in the complaint resolution process. If the person complained of is under 18, their parent/ guardian must be notified and must be present at any discussion about the complaint.

Badminton Wellington may seek guidance from the SRCMS - without breaching any confidences agreed with the complainant - on the most appropriate complaints resolution process in the circumstances.

Badminton Wellington will:

- identify and clearly communicate to the complainant what resolution process it proposes to use; and
- talk with the complainant to seek their agreement to that process before it is put in place.

Possible resolution processes that Badminton Wellington may put in place include:

- (a) consideration of the issues raised by the person or organisation complained of and provision of a written explanation for their or its actions
- (b) dialogue between the parties, facilitated by the organisation;
- (c) dialogue between the parties facilitated by the SRCMS;
- (d) mediation between the parties facilitated by the SRCMS (which is a structured dialogue facilitated by an expert mediator);
- (e) use of a decision-making process by Badminton Wellington
- (f) referral of the complaint to the SRCMS for triage and consultation with the parties to navigate from the initial complaint to an agreed resolution pathway.

Badminton Wellington will generally use process (f) where the person complained of refuses to engage and cannot be compelled to engage (for instance, because they are a supporter or volunteer with no formal links to the organisation).

Organisation Decision Making Process

The following steps or considerations will apply to any decision-making process used by Badminton Wellington to resolve a complaint:

We will provide the complainant and the person or organisation complained of, in advance of the process, with an overview of the structure of the process, the identity of the decision maker(s) and expected timeframe.

We may ask the complainant and any other relevant people, including the person or organisation complained of, to give further information in a way that is comfortable to them.

The decision maker will usually meet separately with the person making the complaint and the person complained about. These meetings will be at a time and place and will be run according to a protocol/agenda that suits everyone, to the extent possible. People may be accompanied by chosen family/whānau and/or other support people.



Badminton Wellington will try to schedule these meetings as soon as possible and ideally within four weeks of the complaint being received. Where it is not possible to meet face to face, the meeting can be held by phone or videocall if people agree and have access to technology.

Decisions should be made in a careful, reasoned way that is justified on the facts and is consistent with any rules that apply. The decision-maker will make their findings on the balance of probabilities.

The decision will be recorded in writing and state, in plain language,:

- the issue
- any applicable policy or rule
- the process followed
- the decision (complaint upheld or not upheld)
- the facts and any evidence relied on, including any submissions or explanations by anyone involved
- the reason for the decision
- any penalty or outcome on any party

Where the decision-maker considers that the concerns raised by the complaint and/or the outcome of the decision affect or are likely to affect the interests of other parties, Badminton Wellington will make best endeavours to obtain the views of such parties or a representative sample of them so that the full context of the issue can be considered.

Badminton Wellington will promptly provide a copy of the decision to the person or organisation complained of and the complainant, and outline any appeal process. The outcome should be discussed so that the parties understand the decision, why it was made, and what will happen next.

Consequences of decisions

Where any complaints involve employees, should any decision relate to their employment, Badminton Wellington will treat them in accordance with their employment contracts and employment law .

Badminton Wellington will treat contractors (who are not employees) fairly, reasonably, and consistent with the terms of their contract.

Badminton Wellington will treat volunteers fairly, reasonably and respectfully in making any decisions about their future conduct or participation in badminton.

The people affected by the decision (the complainant, the person or people complained about, family/whānau and wider community) may have strong feelings about the outcome and the impact on their reputation, rights or mana.

Badminton Wellington will hold a discussion about what steps can be reasonably be taken to restore relationships of everyone involved. It will explore the need to provide support, especially if there are any concerns about health, wellbeing or safety.

All matters relating to a complaint will be recorded in writing and placed on a confidential complaint file including the formal complaint itself, any response to the complaint, notes of any meetings or conversations, relevant documents, committee minutes, the decision and any outcome.

Notifying other parties



Badminton Wellington will share the details of complaints with other parties involved in badminton and agencies (e.g. NZ Police or Oranga Tamariki) as permitted by law.

What is the process for resolving a complaint made directly to the SRCMS?

A complaint made directly to the SRCMS will be triaged by the SRCMS team to identify the most realistic dispute resolution pathway. Its team works impartially with all parties to seek resolution of the matter. The SRCMS acts as a conduit between the complainant and Badminton Wellington so you can expect to receive a call or email from the SRCMS to discuss complaint resolution steps.

The SRCMS has particular expertise in managing sensitive situations and overcoming barriers to dialogue.

Where Badminton Wellington is contacted by SRCMS to advise about a complaint, we will work constructively with the SRCMS to resolve the complaint quickly and effectively.

In the event that the SRCMS suggests an independent investigation, we will consider that suggestion in accordance with the principles of this policy. If we agree to an investigation, we will engage constructively and promptly to provide all relevant information, subject to any legal obligations we have.

What other policies might apply?

If complaints involve alleged serious breaches of the Badminton Wellington Code of Conduct or Badminton Wellington's policies, the matter should be addressed under the Badminton Wellington Disciplinary Procedure and Appeals Policy.

If there is an immediate threat of harm, or the complaint is a mandatory reporting situation, the complaint should be reported to the Police and/or relevant agency.

Badminton Wellington - Complaints Form

<i>Contact details</i>	
Name:	Phone:
Address:	Email:
<i>If you are making a complaint for someone else</i>	
Name of person complaining on behalf of:	
Contact details of person complaining on behalf of:	
<i>Complainant's role/status (please tick)</i>	
Participant	Coach
Employee	Volunteer
Manager	Official
Parent	Supporter
Other (please provide details)	
<i>Details of person complained about</i>	



Name:	Age:
<i>Person complained about role/status (please tick)</i>	
Participant	Coach
Employee	Volunteer
Manager	Official
Parent	Supporter
Other (please provide details)	
<i>Nature of complaint</i>	
Formal	Informal
<i>Nature of complaint (please tick as many as relevant)</i>	
Badminton Wellington management issue	
Unfair decision	Verbal abuse
Coaching issue	Bullying
Sexual harassment	Discrimination
Racism	Physical abuse/assault
Other (please provide details):	
Date(s) of incident:	
<i>Location(s) of incident (please tick)</i>	
Competition	Training
Other (please provide details):	
Description of incident/complaint (please use additional sheets if required)	
<i>Details of any witnesses:</i>	
Name:	
Contact details:	
Action taken so far (if any) to attempt to resolve matter, or ensure safety (please use additional sheets if required):	
<i>If relevant, agency contacted (including the Police):</i>	
Who:	
When:	
Advice provided by agency:	
Complainant name:	
Complainant signature:	
Date:	



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Policy due for review: April 2025