



CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE UTTAR PRADESH AMERICAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (U.P.A.F.A.)

STATUS: DRAFT — V0.1 — NOT YET ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL BODY

This is a working draft prepared as a starting structure. It must be reviewed by legal counsel familiar with the Societies Registration Act / applicable registration statute and Indian sports governance norms before being placed before the General Body for adoption.

1. SCOPE

1.1. This Code binds all members, office bearers, Standing Committee members, coaches, referees, registered players, and District Unit and Club representatives, per Constitution Article 12.1.

1.2. This Code governs conduct in connection with U.P.A.F.A. activities: competitions, training, administration, registration, online communications made in an official or team capacity, and any conduct off the field that seriously affects the Association, its members, or its reputation.

2. CODE OF ETHICS

2.1. Everyone bound by this Code shall: act with honesty and integrity in all Association-related dealings; treat all members, athletes, officials, staff, and the public with respect and without discrimination; put athlete welfare and fair play ahead of results; comply with the Constitution, Bye-laws, this Code, and the Anti-Doping & Safeguarding Policy; and report conduct they reasonably believe violates this Code.

2.2. Office bearers and Standing Committee members additionally owe the Association a duty of loyalty and reasonable care in exercising their office, and must act in the Association's best interests rather than personal or factional interest.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

3.1. A conflict of interest exists where a person's personal, financial, or family interest could reasonably be seen to influence, or actually influences, a decision they are making or participating in on behalf of the Association.

3.2. Anyone in a position to influence an Association decision — including procurement (Bye-laws Article 3.5), registration and certification approvals, disciplinary decisions, and Standing Committee recommendations — must declare a conflict of interest as soon as it arises, using the declaration in Annexure A, and must recuse themselves from the decision. Failure to declare a conflict is itself a violation of this Code.

3.3. A declared conflict is recorded by the Secretary General and reported to the Executive Committee. Recusal does not prevent the person from providing factual information to the decision-maker if asked.

4. ANTI-HARASSMENT, ANTI-BULLYING, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

4.1. Harassment, bullying, hazing, or discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion, caste, disability, or any ground prohibited by applicable law, is prohibited in all Association activities.

4.2. The Association is committed to equal opportunity in registration, selection, coaching assignment, and administration, based on merit and eligibility criteria applied consistently, without discrimination on a prohibited



ground.

4.3. U.P.A.F.A. shall comply with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 wherever it applies to the Association's operations, which prevails over this Code to the extent of any inconsistency. If legal counsel confirms the 2013 Act's Internal Committee (IC) requirement applies to the Association's structure, the Executive Committee shall constitute an Internal Committee as required by that Act. Until an Internal Committee is constituted, a sexual harassment complaint is received and handled by the Women's Commission and the Athlete Welfare & Safeguarding Committee acting jointly, under the process in Section 10, with referral to the appropriate statutory authority (e.g., the District Local Committee under the 2013 Act) where the Act requires it.

5. ANTI-CORRUPTION, ANTI-BRIBERY, AND MATCH MANIPULATION

5.1. No person bound by this Code may offer, give, solicit, or accept a bribe, kickback, or improper benefit connected to any Association decision, selection, appointment, procurement, or match outcome.

5.2. Gifts or hospitality connected to Association business must be of nominal value and disclosed to the Secretary General if their value could reasonably be seen to influence a decision; anything beyond nominal value must be declined or, if impractical, surrendered to the Association.

5.3. No player, coach, referee, or official may bet on, or facilitate betting on, any match in which U.P.A.F.A. or an affiliated District Unit or Club is involved, or manipulate or attempt to manipulate the outcome, or any incident within, such a match. Anyone approached to manipulate a match, or aware of such an approach to another person, must report it to the Grievance & Ethics Committee immediately.

6. WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION AND PROTECTION AGAINST RETALIATION

6.1. A person who reports, in good faith, a suspected violation of this Code, the Anti-Doping & Safeguarding Policy, or applicable law, is a whistleblower and is protected under this Article regardless of whether the report is later substantiated.

6.2. No person may retaliate against a whistleblower or a complainant, witness, or participant in an investigation under this Code — including by suspension, demotion, non-selection, exclusion from activities, or harassment. Retaliation is itself a violation of this Code and is treated with the same or greater severity as the conduct originally reported.

6.3. Reports may be made to grievance@upafa.in, which is monitored by the Grievance & Ethics Committee. A whistleblower's identity is kept confidential to the extent possible consistent with a fair investigation, and is not disclosed to the person complained against without the whistleblower's consent unless required by due process or law.

6.4. A complaint made maliciously, or known by the complainant to be false, is itself a violation of this Code and may be sanctioned under Section 9 — but a complaint that is investigated and not substantiated is not, by that fact alone, treated as false or malicious.



7. REGISTRATION DECISIONS AND CERTIFICATES

7.1. REGISTRATION. An applicant's registration is reviewed by the relevant District Admin (or, where none is assigned, a Super Admin) and is approved or rejected. A rejection is communicated to the applicant with the reason, and may be appealed under Section 10.

7.2. Certificate issuance. On approval, a certificate is issued with a unique, non-sequential certificate ID, a two-year validity period from the date of issue, and a cryptographic signature that the public verification page (/verify) checks against the certificate ID and dates on record. A certificate shows as **Valid**, **Expired**, or **Revoked** at /verify; expiry is automatic and date-based.

7.3. Revocation. The Executive Committee, acting on a Grievance & Ethics Committee recommendation following the due process in Section 10, may direct that a certificate be revoked as a disciplinary sanction (Section 9, Level 3). The direction is executed in the Association's registration system by a Super Admin, or by the District Admin of the district to which the certificate belongs, who must enter the Executive Committee's resolution reference or a clear statement of reason in the system's revocation reason field — this field is mandatory and cannot be left blank. Revocation takes effect immediately: the certificate shows **Revoked** at /verify from that moment, regardless of how much of its two-year validity period remains, and the action is permanently recorded in the Association's audit log together with which admin performed it, when, and the reason given. The audit log is visible only to Super Admins.

7.4. URGENT REVOCATION. A Super Admin, or a District Admin for their own district, may revoke a certificate immediately without waiting for an Executive Committee direction only where there is a credible, immediate concern — such as suspected forgery of the underlying application, or an immediate safety risk to athletes, particularly minors. An urgent revocation under this Article must be reported to the Grievance & Ethics Committee within 48 hours and ratified, reversed, or converted into a formal disciplinary sanction by the Executive Committee within 14 days; if not ratified within 14 days, the certificate is reinstated.

7.5. NOTIFICATION. The Association's registration system does not automatically notify a certificate holder when their certificate is revoked. The admin who executes a revocation (or, for an Executive-Committee-directed revocation, the Secretary General) must separately inform the holder in writing of the revocation and the reason, at the same time the revocation is entered in the system or as soon as practicable after an urgent revocation.

7.6. A revoked certificate does not affect the validity of any other certificate held by the same person, and does not by itself terminate the person's membership — that requires a separate decision under Section 9.

8. VOLUNTEER AND COACH OBLIGATIONS; ATHLETE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1. Coaches, referees, and other adults working with athletes — and particularly with minors — must comply with the child protection provisions of the Anti-Doping & Safeguarding Policy, including the standards of behavior in that Policy's Code of Behavior with Minors.

8.2. Athletes are entitled to: a safe training and competition environment; selection on merit and disclosed criteria; access to the grievance process in this Code without fear of retaliation; and, for registered players, coaches, and referees, the certificate to which their approved registration entitles them.

8.3. Athletes are responsible for: complying with this Code and the Anti-Doping & Safeguarding Policy; competing fairly; and treating opponents, officials, and teammates with respect.



9. DISCIPLINARY TIERS

9.1. Violations of this Code are addressed at one of three levels, at the Executive Committee's discretion based on the severity, intent, repetition, and impact of the conduct:

- **Level 1 — Written Warning.**
- **Level 2 — Suspension** (of membership, registration, selection eligibility, or office, for a period fixed in the decision).
- **Level 3 — Revocation or Expulsion** (of a certificate under Section 7.3, or of membership).

9.2. A Level 3 sanction against an office bearer additionally engages the General Body's removal power under Constitution Article 5.4.

10. COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION AND DUE PROCESS

10.1. A complaint under this Code is made in writing (Annexure B) to grievance@upafa.in or directly to the Grievance & Ethics Committee.

10.2. The Grievance & Ethics Committee (or, where it has a conflict under Standing Committees Charter Article 7.2, its Executive-Committee-appointed substitute) investigates by: giving the person complained against written notice of the allegation; giving them a reasonable opportunity to respond in writing and, if they request it, in person; gathering relevant evidence and, where appropriate, witness statements; and reaching a decision on the balance of probabilities.

10.3. The Committee shall issue a written decision, with reasons, within 30 days of the complaint being made, or explain in writing why more time is needed and give a revised date.

10.4. The Committee recommends a disciplinary tier (Section 9) to the Executive Committee, which makes the final decision on sanction.

11. APPEALS

11.1. A person aggrieved by a registration rejection, a certificate revocation, or a disciplinary decision under this Code may appeal in writing (Annexure C) within **15 CALENDAR DAYS** of the decision.

11.2. An appeal against a District Admin's registration decision, or against a disciplinary decision of the Grievance & Ethics Committee, is heard by the Executive Committee. An appeal against an Executive Committee decision is heard by the General Body at its next meeting, or at an SGM if the Executive Committee considers the matter urgent.

11.3. The appeal body may confirm, reverse, or modify the decision appealed against. Its decision is final, without prejudice to any remedy available to the person under applicable law.

11.4. Filing an appeal does not automatically suspend the decision appealed against, except that a Level 3 sanction against an office bearer is held in abeyance pending the outcome of an appeal filed within the Article 11.1 window, unless the Executive Committee determines that immediate effect is necessary to protect athlete safety.



ANNEXURE A – CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION (DATA FIELDS)

Declarant's name and role; the Association decision or matter concerned; nature of the interest (financial, family, or other) and the party involved; date the conflict arose; declarant's signature and date; recording officer's name and date recorded.

ANNEXURE B – COMPLAINT / DISCIPLINARY REFERRAL FORM (DATA FIELDS)

Complainant's name and contact details (or "anonymous," where permitted); name of the person complained against; date(s) and description of the conduct complained of; supporting evidence or witnesses, if any; relief sought; complainant's signature and date (not required if anonymous).

ANNEXURE C – APPEAL FORM (DATA FIELDS)

Appellant's name and role; decision being appealed and date of that decision; grounds of appeal; supporting documents, if any; appellant's signature and date.

