



**U.S.R.F.R**

***The Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees***

**RULES & REGULATIONS**

**28<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

# **The Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees**

## **1. Constitution, Objects and Membership**

1.1. The name of the Society shall be “The Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees” (hereinafter called “the Society”).

1.2. The Objects of the Society are:

1.2.1. to promote interest in the Game of Rugby Union Football;

1.2.2. to provide referees for matches played under the jurisdiction of the Ulster Branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union (hereinafter called “the Branch”), representative matches and matches played under the jurisdiction of the Game of Rugby Union Football as and when required to do so;

1.2.3. to appraise continually the Laws of Rugby Union Football and to make any necessary recommendations thereon to the Branch.

1.3. The Society shall be affiliated to the Branch and shall be subject to the Byelaws and Regulations of the Branch.

1.4. The Headquarters of the Society shall be at the Headquarters of the Branch.

1.5. Membership of the Society shall be open to:

1.5.1. active referees over the age of 18 years, proposed and seconded by members of the Society;

1.5.2. former active referees of the Society;

1.5.3. other persons over the age of 18 years proposed and seconded by members of the Society.

1.6. No person may become a member of the Society without prior approval of The Council of the Society (constituted under Rule 3 and referred to in these Rules as “The Council”). The Council will routinely delegate authority to bestow membership to the Management Committee (as constituted under Rule 4.) and the Operations Committee (as constituted under Rule 5.).

1.7. Where Council alone forms the view that there is enough evidence for a case to be answered in respect of misconduct (i.e. a ‘prima facie’ case), such as bringing the Society into disrepute, deliberately infringing the laws of the Society, deliberately frustrating the work of the Society or its sub committees or committing an act of misconduct while undertaking activities associated with the Society, the Council shall initiate Disciplinary Procedures appended to these Rules.

1.8. The Society shall not be dissolved other than at a General Meeting convened in accordance with these Rules and no such dissolution shall take place unless nine tenths of the members so propose by written resolution circulated to all members and subsequently passed by ninety per cent of the members present and voting at such meeting.

1.9. The Colours of the Society shall be emerald green and navy blue, together with a badge comprising the unsupported Arms of Ulster subscribed with the initials “USRFR”.

## 2. General Meetings

2.1. An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held not later than 31 August each year at such time and place as the Council shall determine. At least 7 days' notice of the meeting shall be given by circular, published on the USRFR social media, and delivered by electronic mail to each member. The quorum shall be 30. The President shall be Chairman. The meeting shall appoint the Vice-President or a Past-President or member of the Council to act as chairman in the President's absence. On divisions the Chairman shall have a vote and also, in the case of equality, a casting vote.

2.2. The business transacted at each Annual General Meeting shall be:

2.2.1. to receive and approve the reports of the Honorary Secretary and of the Honorary Treasurer;

2.2.2. to elect a President, a Senior Vice-President, a Junior Vice-President, an Honorary Secretary, and an Honorary Treasurer, who together with the immediate Past President are herein collectively referred to as "the Honorary Officers" of the Society;

2.2.3. to elect:

- a. a Membership Secretary;
- b. a representative to each of the following Committees of the Branch:
  - i. the Branch Committee;
  - ii. the Domestic Game Committee;
  - iii. the Clubs' Committee;
  - iv. the Schools Committee;
  - v. the Youth Committee;
  - vi. the Women's Committee; and
  - vii. the Age Grade Committee.

who together are herein collectively referred to as "the Honorary Office Bearers" of the Society.

2.2.4. to elect a Chairman of each of the following Committees of the Society:

- a. the Management Committee;
- b. the Operations Committee; and
- c. the Activities Committee.

2.2.5. to elect four members to the Council, of whom three shall be active referees;

2.2.6. to receive nominations for selection to the Business and Finance Committee, the Administration Committee, and the Activities Committee, as provided respectively in Rules 6.1.2.b., 7.1.2.b. and 8.1.3.b. below;

- 2.2.7. to receive not less than two, and no more than four, nominations from the Operations Committee to represent the Society on the Disciplinary Committee of the Branch, as provided in Rule 5.1.1.j below;
- 2.2.8. to appoint the Society's delegation to the Council of the Branch;
- 2.2.9. to appoint an Honorary Auditor;
- 2.2.10. to fix the rates of subscription for members for the ensuing year;
- 2.2.11. any other business of which notice shall have been given in the notice calling the Meeting; and
- 2.2.12. any other business which may be transacted with the consent of the Chairman.

2.3. Acting on a recommendation from the Council, an Annual General Meeting may admit as Honorary Life Members persons who have rendered particularly notable services to the Society.

2.4. On receiving a requisition signed by 20 or more members, or if the Management Committee so directs, the Honorary Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting of the Society by circular, delivered by electronic mail or facsimile or posted to each member. The notice must state the date, venue and objective for which the meeting is being called and at least 7 days' notice of the meeting shall be given. The quorum shall be 30. The arrangements for appointing the Chairman, and for voting, shall be as for the Annual General Meetings.

2.5. The Management Committee shall arrange for each playing season a programme of meetings for members designed to further the Objects of the Society at such venues decided by the Management Committee. The Management Committee shall have authority to include in the programme, at any time of the year, social functions designed to foster good fellowship amongst the members of the Society and their friends.

2.6. The Honorary Officers of the Society may, at their discretion, attend any meeting of the Management Committee, the Operations Committee, the Business and Finance Committee, the Administration Committee, and the Activities Committee, as ex-officio members.

2.7. Casual vacancies among Honorary Officers and Honorary Office Bearers shall be filled by the Management Committee.

2.8. The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting of the Society, or of any meeting of any Committee or sub-committee of the Society to, or the non-receipt of any such notice by, any person entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate the proceedings at that meeting.

### **3. The Council**

3.1. The supreme authority over the affairs of the Society shall be vested in the Council, which shall:

- 3.1.1. perform the following functions:
  - a. conduct, manage, and control the affairs of the Society;

- b. oversee and monitor the performance of the Management Committee;
- c. and ensure that the Management Committee operates effectively;
- d. consider recommendations from, and such matters as are referred to it by, the Management Committee;
- e. be responsible for dealing with matters of discipline arising within the Society;
- f. determine and take whatever decisions and actions are necessary in the discharge of the foregoing functions.

3.1.2. consist of the following persons:

- a. the President, who shall act as Chairman of the Council;
- b. the Senior Vice-President;
- c. the Junior Vice-President;
- d. the Honorary Secretary;
- e. the Honorary Treasurer;
- f. the Chairman of the Management Committee;
- g. a representative nominated by and on behalf of the Branch;
- h. four members elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Society, of whom three shall be active referees.

3.2. No person elected under Rule 3.1.2.h above may sit on the Council for more than three consecutive years.

3.3. The Council shall have power to co-opt members of the Society for a period not exceeding one year, provided that no such person shall be entitled to vote.

3.4. The Chairman of the Council, and likewise the Chairman of each Committee and sub-committee of the Society, in the transaction of its business, shall have a casting vote in addition to his first vote.

3.5. The Council, and likewise each Committee and sub-committee, shall have the power to act notwithstanding any vacancy in the members thereof. Casual vacancies in a Committee or sub-committee shall be filled by co-option by the Management Committee. The powers of co-option shall not extend to the filling of vacancies amongst nominated representatives from other bodies.

3.6. The Management Committee may approve the formation of any post or sub-committee it deems necessary for the furtherance of the objects of the Society and may make the necessary appointments thereto. The co-option of a holder of a post to the Management Committee shall be at the discretion of the Management Committee.

3.7. Any property of the Society shall be vested in the Council. The Council shall be responsible for the due care and control of the Society property including its disposal in the event of the dissolution of the Society.

3.8. The quorum for a Council meeting shall be 4.

#### **4. Management Committee**

4.1. The Management Committee shall:

4.1.1. perform the following functions:

- a. oversee the Operations Committee, the Business and Finance Committee, the Administration Committee and the Activities Committee;
- b. ensure the Operations Committee, the Business and Finance Committee, the Administration Committee and the Activities Committee adhere to these Rules and the policies of the Society;
- c. monitor the performance of the Operations Committee, the Business and Finance Committee, the Administration Committee and the Activities Committee;
- d. commission, and consider, such reports from the Honorary Officers and the Honorary Office Bearers as it may deem necessary;
- e. determine and take whatever decisions and actions are necessary in, or arising out of, the discharge of the foregoing functions;

4.1.2. consist of the following persons:

- a. a Chairman, elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Society;
- b. the Chairman of the Operations Committee;
- c. the Chairman of the Business and Finance Committee;
- d. the Chairman of the Administration Committee;
- e. the Chairman of the Activities Committee;

4.2. The Chairman of the Management Committee shall be appointed for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Council and the entitlement of the Council to remove the Chairman from office at any time. No person may be Chairman of the Management Committee for more than five consecutive years.

4.3. The Chairman of the Management Committee shall report on the activities of the Management Committee at each meeting of the Council.

4.4. The Management Committee shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Council.

4.5. The quorum for a Management Committee meeting shall be 3.

#### **5. Operations Committee**

5.1. The Operations Committee shall:

5.1.1. perform the following functions:

- a. introduce and implement a recruitment policy to deliver the recruitment targets for referees set from time to time by the Branch;

- b. ensure the provision of an effective induction programme for new referees under an induction co-ordinator appointed by the Operations Committee;
- c. establish, and ensure the effective performance of, an appointments sub-committee to:
  - i. appoint match officials for all adult league and cup fixtures, and for all schools and youth fixtures, under the jurisdiction of the Branch;
  - ii. ensure that all active referees in the Society are graded, and that such grades are reviewed both on an on-going basis and through bi-annual meetings with referee assessors;
- d. ensure that the performance of active referees is assessed under an assessment co-ordinator appointed by the Operations Committee, and that assessment reports are analysed;
- e. ensure an appropriate system is in place for the re-allocation of referees following cry-offs;
- f. ensure that the systems in place for the appointment, selection and assessment of referees, are reviewed annually;
- g. ensure the provision of effective coaching and development programmes for active referees under a coaching co-ordinator appointed by the Operations Committee.
- h. collaborate with the Referee Department of the Irish Rugby Football Union (hereinafter called "the Union") in the provision of:
  - i. workshops for referee development;
  - ii. referees under the Interprovincial Appointment System;
  - iii. National Panel referees;
  - iv. appropriate fitness testing;
- i. organise the annual conference of the Society;
- j. nominate not less than two, and no more than four, persons to represent the Society on the Disciplinary Committee of the Branch;

5.1.2. consist of the following persons:

- a. a Chairman, elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Society;
- b. the Chairman of the appointments sub-committee;
- c. the induction co-ordinator;
- d. the assessment co-ordinator;
- e. the coaching co-ordinator;

- f. the person appointed by the Operations Committee to co-ordinate the operation of the Interprovincial Appointment System on behalf of the Society;
- g. other persons appointed by the Chairman of the Operations Committee subject to the approval of the Council.

5.2. The Chairman of the Operations Committee shall report on the activities of the Operations Committee at each meeting of the Management Committee.

## **6. Business and Finance Committee**

6.1. The Business and Finance Committee shall:

6.1.1. perform the following functions:

- a. control and apply the finances of the Society pursuant to the objects of the Society, and subject to any direction of the Management Committee;
- b. negotiate with the Branch in all financial matters involving the Branch, including the reimbursement of expenses and the provision of funding;

6.1.2. consist of the following persons:

- a. the Honorary Treasurer, who shall act as Chairman of the Business and Finance Committee;
- b. at least three other persons selected by the members of the Council and the Management Committee from the nominations received under Rule 2.2.6 above;
- c. other persons appointed by the Chairman of the Business and Finance Committee subject to the approval of the Council.

6.2. The Chairman of the Business and Finance Committee shall report on the activities of the Business and Finance Committee at each meeting of the Management Committee.

6.3. The Honorary Treasurer shall keep regular accounts of income and expenditure, which shall be submitted to and audited by the Honorary Auditor. The Management Committee shall lay before a General Meeting of the Society copies of the accounts and of the report of the Honorary Auditor thereon.

6.4. The Banking Account of the Society shall be kept at such a Bank and operated upon by such signatories, and any investments of the Society shall be held in the names of such members, as are authorised by the Management Committee and recorded in its minutes.

6.5. The Management Committee shall be responsible for recommending the rates of subscription to the members and the rates shall be authorised by a majority of members at a General Meeting of the Society for which prior notice has been given in accordance with these Rules.

6.6. The members subscription shall be due on or before 30<sup>th</sup> September of each year in respect of the current season. Membership of the Society will be deemed to

have lapsed if there is no payment of Subs by this date. The Council shall have the power to deal with arrears of subscriptions in accordance with Rule 1.7.

## **7. Administration Committee**

7.1. The Administration Committee shall:

7.1.1. perform the following functions:

- a. facilitate the general administration of the Society including, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the implementation of effective internal and external, communications strategies, including the maintenance of the Society's website and its information technology;
- b. appoint, and oversee the performance of, a Public Relations Officer for the Society;
- c. organise, and distribute, the Society's allocation of tickets for international and other representative matches;

7.1.2. consist of the following persons:

- a. the Honorary Secretary, who shall act as Chairman of the Administration Committee;
- b. at least three other persons selected by the members of the Council and the Management Committee from the nominations received under Rule 2.2.6 above;
- c. other persons appointed by the Chairman of the Administration Committee subject to the approval of the Council.

7.2. The Chairman of the Administration Committee shall report on the activities of the Administration Committee at each meeting of the Management Committee.

## **8. Activities Committee**

8.1. The Activities Committee shall:

8.1.1. organise social outings, functions, and activities for the members of the Society, including the annual dinner of the Society and the annual golf outing.

8.1.2. organise the monthly and area meetings of the Society.

8.1.3. consist of the following persons:

- a. a Chairman, elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Society;
- b. at least three other persons selected by the members of the Council and the Management Committee from the nominations received under Rule 2.2.6 above;

c. other persons appointed by the Chairman of the Activities Committee subject to the approval of the Council.

8.2. The Chairman of the Activities Committee shall report on the activities of the Activities Committee at each meeting of the Management Committee.

## 9. Operation of Rules

9.1. These Rules shall come into force as and from May 2025 and shall take the place of all previous Rules which shall thereupon cease to have force or effect.

9.2. Subject to Rule 9.3 these Rules may only be altered at a General Meeting of the Society convened in accordance with these Rules.

9.3. Notice of any proposed alteration to these Rules, together with the name of the proposer and the seconder, must be given to the Honorary Secretary in order that he can lay such notice before the Council and ensure that each member of the Society is provided with due notice of any proposed change of Rule at least 7 days prior to the meeting at which the change is to be considered.

9.4. The Council shall be the final arbiter in the event of any dispute concerning the meaning of, or omissions from, these Rules.

President 24/25:  
Mr Ken Spence

Honorary Secretary:  
Mr Barry O'Hara

Handwritten signature of Ken Spence in black ink, written in a cursive style.Handwritten signature of Barry O'Hara in black ink, written in a cursive style.

# THE ULSTER SOCIETY OF RUGBY FOOTBALL REFEREES SCHEDULE TO THE RULES

## DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

### 1. Disciplinary Procedure

1.1. The Society Disciplinary Procedure applies to all members. Where necessary the Council may elect to transfer its authority for disciplinary matters to the Honorary Officers of the Society.

### 2. Council

2.1. The Council, upon receiving evidence from whatsoever source, both within and / or outside the Society shall determine whether there is a *prima facie* case to answer against a member of the Society. The Council (or the Disciplinary Committee acting on their behalf) shall be the sole judge (and shall be unfettered in its judgment) as to what constitutes a breach of Rule 1.7 of the Rules and Regulations.

2.2. Upon reaching a determination on Disciplinary Rule 2.1 above, the Council shall form a Disciplinary Committee in accordance with Disciplinary Rule 3 below. The Council has the complete discretion to temporarily suspend the individual subject to disciplinary action from all Society activity until such time as the disciplinary process has been exhausted and final outcome determined.

2.3. Once this Disciplinary Committee has been formed, a letter shall be sent to the individual who is subject to the disciplinary proceedings advising them of the said meeting. The letter may follow the form as prescribed in Annex 1 to this Disciplinary Procedure. The letter should include any or all evidence that supports the case against the individual concerned.

2.4. Once the individual has received notification per 2.3, the individual must not publicly publish anything on media or any other platform which may impact the proceedings herein. Any such action shall be considered by the relevant Committee and may be considered when deciding on the sanction.

2.5. The letter shall provide no less than one week of notice to the individual concerned. All evidence and / or witness statements being relied upon by the individual and any written submissions must be sent to the Disciplinary Committee by the individual by return, no later than 48 hours immediately preceding the scheduled time of the Disciplinary Meeting.

2.6. Council has complete discretion to amend or extend these timescales with the agreement of the individual subject to the disciplinary action.

### 3. Disciplinary Committee

3.1. The Disciplinary Committee shall, unless the Members in a general meeting determine otherwise, consist of five persons as follows:

3.1.1. The Senior Vice President (Chairperson)

3.1.2. The Honorary Secretary (keeping record of proceedings)

3.1.3. Three Members of the Council or ordinary Society members as co-opted by the Senior Vice President

- 3.2. The quorum of the Disciplinary Committee shall be three persons (including Senior Vice President and Honorary Secretary).
- 3.3. The Disciplinary Committee will have full powers to deal with all disciplinary matters contained within any terms of reference as determined for it by the Management Committee at any time, together with those matters delegated to it by the Council under Rule 1.7, including the publication of a Disciplinary Code.
- 3.4. Council has the complete discretion to amend the composition of the Disciplinary Committee at 3.1 should it be their reasonable belief that any of the said individuals are unable or unfit to hear the matter for whatsoever reason.
- 3.5. The Disciplinary Committee have the complete discretion to determine an outcome at the meeting on an administrative basis, using the evidence submitted by the various sources, without the need for an 'in person' hearing. Should the individual request an 'in person' hearing, this should be notified to the Disciplinary Committee no later than 48 hours preceding the time of the meeting. Should the Disciplinary Committee form the view that a deliberate attempt has been made to frustrate the proceedings through delays in the individual appearing for any 'in person' hearing, they may at their discretion decide to proceed administratively regardless of an 'in person' request being made.
- 3.6. The Disciplinary Committee may follow the format at Annex 5 for a hearing, but full discretion is given to the Chairperson to amend the procedure adopted in line with the overarching spirit of these Disciplinary rules.
- 3.7. The Disciplinary Committee shall submit written reports of its meetings to the Management Committee & Council.
- 3.8. Each member of the Disciplinary Committee shall hold in confidence all matters discussed at meetings of the Committee.
- 3.9. The Disciplinary Committee have jurisdiction to issue sanctions to the individual on the basis of the evidence that they have had sight of. The said sanctions may include the following in any combination:
- 3.9.1. Warning
  - 3.9.2. Written apology
  - 3.9.3. Temporary revocation of Society membership (for any period)
  - 3.9.4. Permanent revocation of Society membership
  - 3.9.5. The Disciplinary Committee shall have the jurisdiction to suspend part or all of a sanction. Should a suspension be determined, the sanction will not take effect unless the individual comes before a Disciplinary Committee on a subsequent occasion, at which point the sanction will be activated alongside any new sanction for the subsequent misconduct.
- 3.10. The Disciplinary Committee shall issue the letter of determination to the individual concerned within the period and no later than one week commencing at end of the meeting. This letter may follow the form prescribed in Annex 2 to this Disciplinary Procedure.
- 4. Appeals Committee**
- 4.1. The individual may appeal the outcome of the disciplinary investigation by writing to the Honorary Secretary outlining the grounds of their appeal within 1 week of the date of the disciplinary meeting. This appeal request must follow the form

prescribed in Annex 3 to this Disciplinary Procedure. A deposit of £100 shall be lodged with each appeal which shall be returnable only where the appeal is upheld.

4.2. Any appeal under 4.1. shall be considered only on the following grounds:

4.2.1. Fresh evidence being adduced that was not before the Disciplinary Committee (i.e. video evidence, new witness etc.). This should be accompanied with reasoning as to why this evidence was not before the Disciplinary Committee. Should the Appeals Committee decide that this evidence was unreasonably withheld in an attempt to frustrate the Disciplinary Committee hearing, then they shall dismiss the Appeal in its entirety and the decision shall be upheld.

4.2.2. Procedural issues within the Disciplinary Committee hearing which led to a manifestly unfair outcome.

4.3. Any appeal under 4.1. shall be dismissed administratively wholly or in part, should the Appeals Committee form the view that the entire appeal (or a part thereof) is not based on the grounds in 4.2. above (e.g. opinion of unfairness or lack of empathy from the Disciplinary Committee).

4.4. The Appeals Committee shall, unless the Members in a general meeting determine otherwise, consist of five persons as follows:

4.4.1. The President (Chairperson)

4.4.2. The Chairperson of Management (keeping record of proceedings)

4.4.3. Three members of the Council co-opted by the President, none of whom sat on the Disciplinary Committee that made the decision being appealed.

4.5. The quorum of the Appeals Committee shall be three persons (including the President and Chair of Management).

4.6. Council has the complete discretion to amend the composition of the Appeals Committee at 4.4. should it be their reasonable belief that any of the said individuals are unable or unfit to hear the matter for whatsoever reason.

4.7. The member making the appeal will be advised of the date and location of the appeal hearing.

4.8. The member can be accompanied to the appeal investigation by another member of the Society. The member should request and identify the accompanying member along with submission of any written submissions no later than 48 hours preceding the time of the Appeal Hearing.

4.9. The Appeals Committee may follow the format at Annex 6 for a hearing, but full discretion is given to the Chairperson to amend the procedure adopted in line with the overarching spirit of these Disciplinary rules.

4.10. The Appeals Committee have the complete discretion to determine an outcome of the hearing on an administrative basis, using the submissions submitted by the Appellant, without the need for an 'in person' hearing. Should the individual request an 'in person' hearing, this should be notified to the Appeals Committee no later than 48 hours preceding the time of the meeting.

4.11. The first instance Disciplinary Committee will be notified of the Appeal by the Honorary Secretary, to include the grounds upon which their decision has been appealed. They may make written submissions in reply to the grounds and in the

case of an 'in person' hearing, a representative from the first instance Disciplinary Committee may be present to make oral submissions to the Appeals Committee.

4.12. The Appeals Committee have the power to:

4.12.1. Affirm the decision of the Disciplinary Committee

4.12.2. Affirm the decision of the Disciplinary Committee and issue a more severe sanction

4.12.3. Uphold the appeal, setting aside the decision of the Disciplinary Committee and quashing any sanction imposed

4.12.4. Uphold the appeal in part, by setting aside part only of the decision appealed against

4.12.5. Substitute for the decision appealed against, a decision to find the appellant guilty of a lesser offence and/or to impose a lesser sanction or sanctions in respect thereof

4.12.6. Refer the case, or any part of it, back to the Disciplinary Committee

4.12.7. Take any step which, in the exercise of its discretion, the Appeals Committee considers appropriate in order to deal justly with the case in question within the parameters laid down by the Rules and Regulations.

4.13. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the appellant may be held liable for all or part of the expenses of the appeal procedure. Should the appeal board consider any appeal to be of a frivolous or vexatious nature, it shall have power to deal with the Appellant as it shall deem appropriate.

4.14. An appeal may be withdrawn by an appellant prior to the hearing of the case by notifying the Honorary Secretary of withdrawal in writing. The appeal shall, upon receipt of such notification by the Honorary Secretary, be deemed to be abandoned and the original decision against which the appellant appealed shall be regarded as final and binding. Upon withdrawal of an appeal, the appeal deposit shall be forfeited. The appellant may be held liable by the Appeals Committee for all or part of the expenses of the appeal procedure.

4.15. Upon the conclusion of each appeal the Appeals Committee shall submit a written report on the outcome of the appeal to the Management Committee.

4.16. The Appeals Committee shall issue the letter of notification of decision to the individual concerned within the period and no later than one week commencing at end of the hearing. This letter may follow the form prescribed in Annex 4 to this Disciplinary Procedure.

4.17. Each member of the Appeals Committee shall hold in confidence all matters discussed at meetings of the Committee.

4.18. The Appeals Committee decision constitutes the full and final exhaustion of the Society's disciplinary procedure. In the event of a revocation of membership, the member should not make any further contact whatsoever with anyone in the Society in relation to the disciplinary matters for the period of their revocation (or at all if the revocation is permanent). Breach of this rule may result in further disciplinary action being brought against the member.

4.19. After the Appeals Committee letter of notification of decision, no further communication will take place between any of the individuals involved in the

disciplinary process, save for correspondence between legal representatives should it be deemed that instruction of legal representation be required.

4.20. Records of action taken by the Disciplinary Committee and the Appeals Committee will be held by the Honorary Secretary. The member has the right to request copies of this information, however this information may be withheld or redacted in line with the GDPR obligations placed on the Society or with a for example with a view to protecting a participant in the proceedings.

4.21. If a member has had their membership revoked for any period greater than 12 months following a disciplinary process, it is necessary for that member to return to membership as a 'trial referee'. Should the member complete the trial process, the Operations Committee will then decide whether the referee can return to full membership and if so, at what grading, using the standard procedure as applies to all trial referees.

Annex 1

Form 1

Dear....

**RE: Notification of a Meeting of the Disciplinary Committee of the USRFR**

We refer to the above matter and the Disciplinary Procedure attached hereto.

A matter has been brought to the attention of the Council of the USRFR that it is alleged that you may be in breach of Rule 1.7 of our Rules and Regulations. Rule 1.7 reads as follows:

*“Where Council forms the view that there is enough evidence for a case to be answered in respect of misconduct, such as bringing the Society into disrepute, deliberately infringing the laws of the Society, deliberately frustrating the work of the Society or its sub committees or committing an act of misconduct while undertaking activities associated with the Society, the Council shall initiate Disciplinary Procedures appended to these Rules.”*

The nature of the allegations against you are as follows .....

The Council of the USRFR have met and have agreed that there is sufficient evidence presented to them for a case to be answered and accordingly you are invited to make representations or provide evidence in support of your position. There has been **no decision** taken, or view formed on the merits of this case, but the Council must decide whether or not forming a Disciplinary Committee is appropriate given the complaint that has been made, or the evidence submitted to them. The decision was taken by the Council that there is sufficient evidence and therefore a Disciplinary Committee must be held in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure.

Accordingly you are hereby notified that the Disciplinary Committee will meet on ..... at .....

The Disciplinary Committee will consist of.....

You will be notified in advance should this composition of the Disciplinary Committee change.

Please notify me by return whether you intend to submit further evidence, call witness evidence, make written submissions and or whether you would like the Committee to meet ‘in person’ as opposed to the Committee considering the evidence administratively without the need for an in person hearing. This can be done by returning the form 1B attached to me.

Yours etc.

**Form 1B**

Please tick the relevant boxes below

- I agree that I have breached Rule 1.7 and wish the Disciplinary Committee to give me full credit for my early admission in reaching their sanction (feel free to attach mitigating submissions to assist the panel).
  
- I do not agree with any / all of the matters that have been alleged against me and wish the matter to be considered on the basis that I refute the allegations.
  
- (If yes above) I wish the Disciplinary Committee to hold an in person hearing of this matter (please note the 'in person' hearing may proceed via online video call).

Please provide reasons as to why hearing is being requested below (usually this is to challenge evidence that has been brought / ask questions of a witness).

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Please attach with this form any or all evidence that you wish to rely upon at the disciplinary meeting. Please provide a description of the evidence below along with names of any witnesses. Should you wish to provide written statement evidence, please complete this on another page and return it along with this form.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Annex 2**

**Form 2**

Dear.....

RE: Letter of determination of USRFR Disciplinary Committee

We refer to the above matter and to the meeting of the USRFR Disciplinary Committee on ..... Having considered the matter [administratively / in person / on a zoom call], the panel were of the view that on the balance of probabilities you [were / were not] in breach of our misconduct provisions under Rule 1.7 of the Rules and Regulations of the USRFR.

The Committee reached this decision on the basis of the following findings of fact, it was determined on the balance of probabilities that the following occurred:

---

---

---

---

---

Therefore, under Rule 3.8 of our Disciplinary procedures, the Disciplinary Committee have issued the following sanction against you:

---

---

---

---

---

Please note, you have 1 weeks from the date of the Disciplinary Committee meeting within which to appeal this decision. To appeal the decision, you must write to me using form Annex 3 (attached) alongside the lodgement of £100 into the USRFR Bank account (or by cheque addressed to the USRFR). This lodgement is refundable upon successful appeal.

**Annex 3**

**Form 3**

**Appeal Notification**

*(to be submitted to the Honorary Secretary USRFR within 1 week following the disciplinary hearing and accompanied with a £100 appeal deposit – cheques payable to Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees, or via transfer to ACC xxxxxxxx Sort xxxxxx – please include your name in the description).*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Committee Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Date of notification of decision letter \_\_\_\_\_

Please state whether you wish to appeal the decision of the disciplinary committee on liability (i.e. whether you actually committed misconduct) or on sanction (i.e. that the sanction issued was too harsh) or both

Liability

Sanction

Both

Please state the grounds that form the basis of your appeal below (please continue on another sheet if required). Please also outline whether you wish a hearing to happen in person / administratively (and for what reasons).

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Annex 4*

*Form 4*

**Notification of Decision of the Appeal Committee USRFR**

Dear.....

RE: Letter of determination of USRFR Appeals Committee

We refer to the above matter and to the meeting of the USRFR Appeals Committee on ..... Having considered the matter [*administratively / in person / on a zoom call*], the panel were of the view that on the balance of probabilities, the initial Disciplinary Committee [*did / did not*] arrive at the correct outcome on [*liability / sanction / both liability and sanction*].

The Committee reached this decision on the basis of the following findings of fact, it was determined on the balance of probabilities that the following occurred:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Therefore, under Rule 3.8 of our Disciplinary procedures, the Disciplinary Committee have issued the following sanction against you:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

This Appeals Committee decision constitutes the full and final exhaustion of the Society's disciplinary procedure; no further correspondence related to this matter will be entered into; any breach of this may result in further disciplinary action.

## Annex 5

### Format of Disciplinary Meeting

*The Chair of the Disciplinary Meeting has complete discretion in terms of process of the meeting, provided the meeting adheres to the overriding objective of fairness in all aspects. It is for the Chair to set out the process / procedure for the meeting and all participants must adhere to any ground rules. Each participant in the meeting must not speak unless permitted / invited to do so by the chair. The burden of proof rests on the complainant; the disciplinary panel is to determine on the balance of probabilities whether the allegations are made out.*

1. Welcome & introductions
2. Outline of allegations
3. Summary of written evidence / submissions
4. Complainant oral evidence (and questioning through the chair)
5. Respondent oral evidence (and questioning through the chair)
6. Complainant's submissions
7. Accused's submissions
8. Chair summary and conclude

## Annex 6

### Format of Appeals Hearing

*The Appeals Hearing is **not** a de novo hearing or rehearing of evidence. No new evidence is to be brought at Appeals Hearing level that has not been supported by rationale for its unavailability at Disciplinary Committee level. The Appellant should provide notice to the panel in advance on what basis the Disciplinary Hearing is being appealed, the Appeals Committee have discretion to consider the application and are able to refuse leave to appeal. This 'review' style of appeal will only consider whether the original Disciplinary Committee's decision was fair, reasonable and proportionate in all the circumstances, without re-hearing all the evidence. The Appeals Committee must not interfere with a decision unless it was clearly wrong.*

1. Welcome & introductions
2. Outline decision being appealed
3. Summary of Disciplinary Committee findings
4. Appellant submissions
5. Respondent submissions
6. Chair summary and conclude