



## **IRFU DISCIPLINARY GUIDE**

### **August 2021**

#### **Incorporating:**

- **IRFU Regulation 5 – Discipline**
- **Rules for Disciplinary Procedures**
- **IRFU Sanctioning Policy**
- **World Rugby Recommended Sanctions**
- **Forms referred to within the Rules for Disciplinary Procedure**
- **Code of Conduct**
- **Safeguarding Case Management Process**

## Foreword

The IRFU has long recognised the necessity of having effective Disciplinary Rules, as well as equitable procedures to apply those Rules fairly. The purpose of the IRFU Disciplinary Guide is to explain concisely the Rules and Procedures, in support of their key objective – to ensure that justice is obtained in disciplinary proceedings and that decisions are made in a fair, consistent, independent, and expeditious manner.

The World Rugby *Recommended Sanctions for Foul Play* are adopted, as IRFU is obliged to do. These are subject to application at the discretion of any Discipline Committee and Appeals Committee, based on the circumstances of each case. The Sanctioning Policy is incorporated to explain the process of determining the sanction to be applied. For the avoidance of any doubt, the World Rugby Recommended Sanctions for Offences within the Playing Enclosure to be applied in any one case shall be those sanctions prescribed and in force at the time of the commission of the offence irrespective of the date upon which any sanction may be imposed.

IRFU has chosen to adopt the optional World Rugby *Underage Sanction Table*, with each Discipline Committee continuing to exercise its powers of discretion in relation to the age and relative inexperience of players.

In addition, the World Rugby Code of Conduct has been adopted by IRFU. It is referred to within the body of the Rules and all Players, Persons and Clubs connected to the game of Rugby in Ireland must observe its terms. As a member of World Rugby, IRFU is bound to monitor and enforce the Code in Ireland.

Regulation 5 is the disciplinary regulation of the full IRFU regulations, and this is included in this guide.

Kevin Beggs

IRFU Competitions Manager and Discipline Officer

[kevin.beggs@irfu.ie](mailto:kevin.beggs@irfu.ie)

01 637 9434

[IrishRugby.ie](http://IrishRugby.ie) Discipline

## **IRFU RULES FOR DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

**Page 4** IRFU Regulation 5

- 5.1** Disciplinary Committee
- 5.2** Committee of Appeal
- 5.3** Composition of the Disciplinary Committees
- 5.4** Branch Disciplinary Committee
- 5.5** Disciplinary Officer
- 5.6** Committee Procedure
- 5.7** Enforcement Powers
- 5.8** Disciplinary Procedures
- 5.9** Committee Decisions
- 5.10** Appeals
- 5.11** Appointment of the Committee to Appeal
- 5.12** Decisions of Committee Appeal
- 5.13** General
- 5.14** Multiple Incidents
- 5.15** Conduct and Responsibility
- 5.16** Technical and Procedural Breaches

**Page 14** APPENDIX 1 - Guidelines for Hearing Committees

**Page 17** APPENDIX 2 - Sanctioning Policy

**Page 20** APPENDIX 3 - World Rugby Sanction Table

**Page 24** APPENDIX 4 - World Rugby Sanction Table for Underage Players

**Page 28** Links to forms and Documents

## **5. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES**

The disciplinary committees of the Union are the Disciplinary Committee and the Committee of Appeal.

### **5.1 Disciplinary Committee**

This is a Sub Committee of the Union Committee to hear disciplinary cases relating to sendings off, citing, misconduct or conduct (whether or not involving or relating to player participation) which is detrimental to the best interests of the Union or the Game, or any other matter referred to it from time to time by the Committee and including:

#### **5.1.1 Matters arising from: -**

- (i) Matches in the All-Ireland League and Cup;
- (ii) Matches involving Branch Representative Teams;
- (iii) All other matches under the jurisdiction of the Union not being matches under the jurisdiction of a Branch;
- (iv) Acts or omissions to act, including for the avoidance of doubt breaches of codes of conduct of the Union, its Committee or its sub-committees.

#### **5.1.2 Matters referred by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of the Disciplinary Officer of the Union;**

#### **5.1.3 Matters relating to Regulations 6 and 9 of these Regulations.**

#### **5.1.4 Remote Hearings and Expedited Procedures**

In particular circumstances, the Union may wish to utilise remote hearings or expedited disciplinary procedures, to alleviate the practical difficulties caused by physical distance, reduce costs, or for any other relevant reasons concerning the case in question.

The procedure for remote hearings shall be the same as that used for in person hearings as set out in World Rugby Regulation 17, save that some or all of the parties, may attend the hearing by audio or audio-visual means. Where the Union proposes a remote hearing, Players shall have the right to request an in-person hearing. Remote hearings may also be considered for an Appeal.

Expedited procedures will vary depending on the circumstances. An example of such procedures is the use of a foul play review committee that considers the alleged act(s) of foul play and provides the player with an indication of the sanction that would be imposed were the player to admit the act(s) of foul play. The player has the option to accept the sanction or to reject the sanction and request a hearing.

Notwithstanding the existence of the expedited procedure, a Player or person shall always have the right to have a hearing that complies with the requirements of Regulation 17.

Where expedited procedures are utilised, they shall be treated as enforceable by World Rugby in the same way as Regulation 17.

## **5.2 Committee of Appeal**

This is a Sub Committee of the Union Committee to hear appeals from the Disciplinary Committee and the League Sub Committee provided for in Regulation 9 (“the League Sub Committee”). In accordance with the provisions of 5.1.4 above, a Committee of Appeal may consider it necessary, and shall be entitled to utilise the aforesaid remote hearing procedure.

## **5.3 Composition of the Disciplinary Committees**

5.3.1 The Union Committee shall appoint: -

- (i) The Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee and the Chairman of the Committee of Appeal both of whom shall be members of the Union Committee;
- (ii) A panel (“the Panel”) of persons, preferably with experience in disciplinary matters or with a legal or rugby background, who need not be members of the Union Committee to be members of the Disciplinary Committees.

5.3.2 The Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee shall select the members of each hearing committee (“the hearing committee”) including the chairman thereof from the Panel.

In certain circumstances, the Chairman shall appoint a single Judicial Officer, being a member of the panel of the Disciplinary Committee authorised to conduct the hearing and make a finding thereon.

5.3.3 The Chairman of the Committee of Appeal shall select the members of each hearing committee including the chairman thereof from the Panel.

5.3.4 The hearing committee shall not include any person who is a member of a club with any direct interest in the issue under consideration.

5.3.5 The quorum for any hearing committee shall consist of a chairman and two other members of the Panel.

5.3.6 If a member of any hearing committee (other than the chairman) is unable or unwilling, for any reason, to act, then the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee or the Committee of Appeal may, in his absolute discretion, either;

- (i) Appoint another member of the Panel as a replacement; or
- (ii) Appoint a new hearing committee.

## 5.4 Branch Disciplinary Committees

Each Branch shall set up a Branch Disciplinary Committee and a Branch Committee of Appeal which shall have power to act in the name of the Branch in dealing with disciplinary cases, sendings off, citings, misconduct or conduct detrimental to the best interests of the Branch, the Union or the Game, whether on or off the playing enclosure, arising from matches under the jurisdiction of, or approved by, the Branch to be dealt with by the Branch pursuant to Regulation 5.9

## 5.5 Disciplinary Officer

5.5.3 The Union Committee shall appoint a Disciplinary Officer who shall be an employee of the Union.

5.5.4 The functions of the Disciplinary Officer shall be:

- 5.5.4.1 To receive disciplinary reports, complaints and appeals on behalf of the Union, to convene the appropriate hearing committee to deal with the case and to communicate its decision to the relevant parties;
- 5.5.4.2 To act as Rugby Administration Manager of the Union to include the administration of the All Ireland League and Cup;
- 5.5.4.3 To investigate cases of alleged misconduct or any conduct alleged to be detrimental to the best interests of the Union or of the Game, whether on or off the field of play, and whether or not the incident has been dealt with by the match officials, and to recommend to the Chief Executive, in appropriate cases, that the matter be referred to the Disciplinary Committee;
- 5.5.4.4 To ensure in circumstances that involve a player under the age of 18, the Union will direct that the Union Safeguarding Officer shall deal with the IRFU Case Management Process. In some cases, there may be a requirement for input from both parties.
- 5.5.4.5 To advise the Chief Executive of the names of persons for appointment as Match Commissioners, or Citing Commissioners, or to act on the Panel for the hearing committees.

## 5.6 Committee Procedures

In these Regulations the expression, the “hearing committee”, shall include the Disciplinary Committee and Committee of Appeal set up by a Branch and the Disciplinary Committee and the Committee of Appeal set up by the Union. For cases involving players under the age of 18, and/or vulnerable persons, the hearing committee, where relevant circumstances pertain, shall consult with the Welfare Officer to establish that a **safeguarding case management assessment** (*see link page 30*) has taken place, or is required, prior to the disciplinary process commencing.

### 5.6.1

- (i) The Disciplinary Officer on the instruction of the chairman of the hearing committee shall confirm to the parties involved the date, time and place at which the hearing will take place;

- (ii) Any objection to the composition of a hearing committee shall be made not later than 48 hours before the date of the hearing, failing which any objection shall be deemed to have been waived, provided only that if the composition of the hearing committee has not been notified to the parties or it has been changed, so that it is not practicable to object 48 hours before the hearing, the objection may be made at the commencement of the hearing;
- (iii) The chairman of a hearing committee shall be entitled to determine any pre-hearing procedural or evidential issues or disputes without recourse to the other members of the hearing committee;
- (iv) Subject to the requirements of natural justice the procedures to be adopted at the hearing shall entirely be at the discretion of the hearing committee;
- (v) A hearing committee may require any person to attend the hearing as a witness and shall be entitled to call experts to provide specialist advice, including legal advice;
- (vi) The chairman of a hearing committee shall be entitled to postpone or adjourn a hearing at his own discretion;
- (vii) All proceedings before a hearing committee shall be held in private unless otherwise ordered by the hearing committee;
- (viii) A decision of a hearing committee shall be valid if taken by a majority of the members of that committee. No member of a hearing committee may abstain from any decision. Where a hearing committee has an even number of members and the members of such committee are unable to come to a unanimous or majority decision, then the chairman shall have a casting vote.
- (ix) In any case where a hearing committee is required to consider: -
  - (a) an incident of alleged foul play it may decide to impose a penalty or take such action as it deems appropriate in all the circumstances;
  - (b) a referee's decision to send off a player, the hearing committee may review the referee's reasons for the decision and the circumstances surrounding it. In any such case the hearing committee shall not make a finding contrary to the referee's decision unless it is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that on the evidence adduced by or on behalf of the player, the referee's reasons for his decision were wrong;
  - (c) an incident of alleged foul play which has not been the subject of a determination on the field of play by a referee it shall not impose any penalty unless it is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the allegation is proved.
- (x) At any hearing the absence of any party or witness shall not, of itself, prevent the hearing committee from hearing and determining the matter.
- (xi) Where a hearing committee requests a Branch, Club, player or person to provide information in relation to any matter, a reasonable time limit may be permitted and notified for the provision of such information and in the event that such time limit is not complied with, the hearing committee may deal with the matter in the absence of such information.

## **5.7. Enforcement Powers**

5.7.1. Where there is a breach or non-observance of any regulation, law or code of conduct, misconduct, or any other disciplinary matter, or a failure to fulfil a fixture, or non-compliance with any regulation, requirement or decision of a committee or in any case considered to be

detrimental to the best interests of the Game or the Union the hearing committee shall be entitled in its absolute discretion to impose any one or more of the following sanctions or penalties on the offending Branch, Club, player or person, as the case may be:-

- (i) A caution, a warning as to future conduct, or a reprimand;
- (ii) A fine;
- (iii) The requirement to replay a match at such time and at such venue as is thought fit;
- (iv) The forfeiture of, and/or the granting to another club or clubs, of the competition points for a match;
- (v) The deduction of competition points;
- (vi) The suspension or expulsion of the Branch, Club, player or person for such period as may be deemed appropriate;
- (vii) Such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate;
- (viii) Make a payment of costs.

## **5.8. Disciplinary Procedures**

### **5.8.1. Sendings Off**

The referee, unless exceptional circumstances make it impossible, shall, within twenty-four hours of the end of the match in which he sent the player off the field of play, send to the Secretary of the Branch and the Secretary of the Association or Society of Referees, or in the case of All Ireland League and Cup matches the Disciplinary Officer of the Union, a written report incorporating:

- (i) The name of the player and his club;
- (ii) The circumstances in which the player was sent off the field of play;
- (iii) The reason or reasons for the sending off;
- (iv) Any other circumstances he considers material.

### **5.8.2. Citings**

#### **5.8.2.1 Citings involving Citing Commissioners**

Where the Union appoints an independent Citing Commissioner to act on its behalf for matches under its jurisdiction World Rugby Regulation 17 shall apply to any such appointment.

#### **5.8.2.2 Citings not involving Citing Commissioners**

- (i) Where a player commits an act of foul play which would warrant the player concerned being sent off, which has not been detected by the match officials, then in such circumstances, either the Union, clubs, or organisations participating in the match have the discretion to cite that player in writing to the Union or the Branch having jurisdiction over the match.
- (ii) A citing can be made by any of the participating organisations (i.e. Union, Branch, Club, Referees' Association or Society) through its Disciplinary Officer or its Secretary.
- (iii) A citing must be made in writing using the IRFU citing form set out in Appendix 5 below within seventy-two hours of the end of the day of the alleged incident to the



Secretary of the player's Branch or the Disciplinary Officer of the Union giving the following information:

- a. The date and place of the alleged incident;
  - b. The name of the Club and the team of the alleged offender;
  - c. The name of the opposing team; and
  - d. Full details of the alleged incident including video evidence in support
- (iv) The player, his club, the referee and where applicable the touch judges, shall be sent copies of the citing complaint.
- (v) Once a citing is received the video evidence will be reviewed by a panel consisting of the IRFU Disciplinary Officer, the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee, and the Head of Referees. Should the panel determine the action cited should have resulted in a red card and all the required information is correctly received, the player will be called to a Disciplinary Hearing. There is no requirement for the citing club to attend the hearing, although they must be prepared to give further evidence during the hearing by video, skype or telephone, if required. If the panel determine that the action does not meet the red card test, the case will not proceed. Video evidence must be supplied at IRFU level hearings.
- (vi) A cited player, other than a player cited by a Citing Commissioner, may continue playing the game until suspended by a hearing committee.

### **5.8.3. Procedures in sending off and citing.**

#### **5.8.3.1**

- (i) All disciplinary matters referred to in Regulation 5.4. above, shall be dealt with by the Branch;
- (ii) All other cases shall be dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee of the Union.

#### **5.8.3.2**

- (i) The referee or other match official as appropriate, shall be invited, and shall be available to attend the hearing committee at which the allegation against a player will be dealt with for the purpose of assisting the hearing committee in reaching its decision.
- (ii) The referee or other match official shall be entitled to be represented by a person of his own choice at the hearing committee.
- (iii) The absence of the referee or other match official shall not prevent the hearing committee dealing with the case nor shall such absence, if any, invalidate the decision of the hearing committee.

**5.8.3.3** The player sent off or cited shall be informed by the Branch or the Union, as appropriate, through his own club as soon as possible of:

- (i) The reason for his sending off, including a copy of the match official's report, or if the player is cited, a copy of the citation, and a copy of the video evidence in support.

- (ii) The date, place and time of the hearing and where practicable the members of the hearing committee;
- (iii) The date and place of the alleged incident and the names of the teams involved;
- (iv) A requirement that he appear in person before the hearing committee and that if he be unable to do so that he shall contact the chairman of the hearing committee immediately.

#### 5.8.3.4

- (i) Only in exceptional circumstances should a hearing be dealt with in the absence of the player;
- (ii) When necessary, the hearing committee should accommodate a reasonable request by the player that the hearing be postponed or adjourned;
- (iii) The player shall be entitled to be accompanied by up to two persons one of whom may be a legal representative at the hearing.

5.8.3.5 A player who has been sent off shall not play the game pending determination of his case.

### 5.9 Committee Decisions

5.9.1 The hearing committee or Judicial Officer in making its decision in the case of illegal or foul play shall have regard to the World Rugby Sanctions and Procedures contained in Appendix 1 below.

5.9.1.1 If the hearing committee or Judicial Officer finds on the facts established before it that the offence referred to in the referee's report or in the citation has not been proved but that a lesser offence has been committed by the player, it may decide to sanction the player for such lesser offence.

5.9.1.2 In the case of misconduct, the hearing committee or Judicial Officer shall have the power to impose any one or more of the following sanctions which sanction may, where appropriate, be suspended: -

A caution, a warning as to future conduct, or a reprimand;

- (i) A fine.
- (ii) The requirement to replay a match at such time and at such venue as is thought fit;
- (iii) The forfeiture of, and/or the granting to another club or clubs, of the competition points for a match;
- (iv) The deduction of competition points;
- (v) The suspension or expulsion of the Branch, Club, player or person for such period as may be deemed appropriate;
- (vi) Such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate;
- (vii) Make a payment of costs.

5.9.2 The Disciplinary Officer and the parties shall be notified in writing as soon as practicable after a decision of the hearing committee has been made.

5.9.3 In cases where the Branch deals with disciplinary matters under Regulation 5.4 above, in the event of the player being from a visiting club affiliated to another Branch of the Union, the referee's report or citation shall be sent by the Secretary of the Branch under whose jurisdiction the game was played to the Secretary of that other Branch which shall deal with the hearing.

5.9.4 In the event of the player being from a visiting club affiliated to another Union, the referee's or match official's report or citation shall be sent by the Secretary of the Branch under whose jurisdiction the game was played to the Chief Executive of the Union who shall forward it to that other Union to deal with the hearing.

## **5.10 Appeals**

### **5.10.1 Right of Appeal**

#### **5.10.1.1**

- (i) An appeal may be brought to the Committee of Appeal by a Branch, club or player from a decision of the Disciplinary Committee or the League Sub Committee.
- (ii) An appeal may be brought to the Branch Committee of Appeal by a club or player from a decision of its Branch Disciplinary Committee.

5.10.1.2 The filing of a notice of appeal against a decision of a hearing committee shall not act as a stay on or deferral of any penalty or sanction imposed by the hearing committee.

5.10.1.3 In this Regulation 10 the expression "Committee of Appeal" shall include the Committee of Appeal of the Union and the Branch Committee of Appeal as the case may be.

5.10.1.4 Save as otherwise provided in Law 25 of the Laws of the Union, in all cases the decision of the Committee of Appeal shall be final and binding on all parties and shall neither be appealed nor reviewed in a court of law.

### **5.10.2 Notice of Appeal**

5.10.2.1 For an appeal to be valid, the party making the appeal (the "appellant") shall comply with the following conditions:

- (i) File a notice of appeal (the "notice of appeal") and comply in all respects with regulation 5.10.2.1(ii) below, with the Disciplinary Officer of the Union or the Branch as is appropriate not more than fourteen days after the date of the decision being appealed against. The notice of appeal shall be deemed to have been filed when the Appeal Form is received by the Disciplinary Officer of the Union or the Branch as the case may be;
- (ii) Sign the Appeal form and set out thereon: -

- (a) The specific aspect(s) and parts of the decision being challenged, and:
- (b) The specific grounds of challenge. No further grounds of challenge may be advanced without the express prior consent of the Committee of Appeal.

- (iii) When an appeal is made on behalf of a player by a club it shall only be done with the prior written consent of the player.
- (iv) The notice of appeal must be accompanied by a sum of €500.

5.10.2.2 A copy of the notice of appeal must be served on all the other parties to the original proceedings all of whom shall be deemed to be parties to the appeal.

5.10.2.3 Where the conditions above are not fully complied with the appeal shall be deemed to be invalid and shall be dismissed by the chairman of the Committee of Appeal unless the appellant demonstrates sufficient cause and establishes exceptional circumstances to the chairman to exercise his absolute discretion to permit the appeal to proceed. If the appeal is dismissed pursuant to this regulation the original decision appealed against shall be deemed to be final and binding.

## **5.11 Appointment of the Committee of Appeal**

5.11.1 When a notice of appeal is filed, the Chairman of the Committee of Appeal shall appoint three members from the Panel to sit as the hearing committee to hear the appeal.

5.11.2 When a notice of appeal is filed, the Chairman of the Committee of Appeal shall appoint three members from the Panel to sit as the hearing committee to hear the appeal.

## **5.12 Decisions of Committee of Appeal**

5.12.1 The Committee of Appeal may: -

- (i) Affirm the decision appealed against;
- (ii) Set aside, in whole or in part, the decision appealed against;
- (iii) Substitute its own decision for the decision appealed against;
- (iv) Revoke or modify any direction or order as to costs;
- (v) Order that the whole or part of the €500 paid by the appellant with the Notice of Appeal be refunded. Should the appeal be lost, the default position for the Committee of Appeal shall be to retain the €500. Consideration of any return, either in whole or part, shall be at the discretion of the Committee of Appeal.
- (vi) Take any other step that it considers necessary to determine the appeal.
- (vii) Order a payment of costs.

5.12.2 The Committee of Appeal shall advise the parties of its decision which shall take effect immediately. The Committee shall confirm its decision in writing as soon as practicable after the hearing.

## **5.13 General**

### **5.13.1 Public Announcements**

The Disciplinary Officer may publish the decisions of the hearing committee as soon as is practicable after the decision has been communicated to the parties. The public announcement of the decision may be by release of the decision itself, or by way of a summary that includes details of the illegal or foul play or misconduct and of the sanctions imposed, if any.

5.13.2 Until such time as a decision is published all parties shall treat the proceedings and the decision itself as confidential.

## **5.14 Multiple Incidents**

Two or more persons or parties may be dealt with at the same hearing committee where the issues and matters to be decided arise out of the same match, incident or facts.

## **5.15 Conduct and Responsibility**

5.15.1 Clubs participating in matches are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their players, officials, members and supporters and in accordance with the Spirit of Rugby Charter (*see link page 28*)

5.15.2 Clubs, players, officials and members shall ensure that:

- (i) matches are played in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour;
- (ii) none of a club's players, officials, members or supporters engage in any act or acts of misconduct;

5.15.3 For the avoidance of doubt a Club or player may be sanctioned for misconduct even if a referee has already penalised one or more players for his or their conduct during a match.

## **5.16 Technical and Procedural Breaches**

No proceedings, decisions, or orders made pursuant to these regulations shall be deemed invalid by reason only of any procedural or drafting omission or irregularity.

### **5.16.1 Extension of Time**

Where under these regulations any time is permitted or prescribed the hearing committee shall have discretionary power, on good cause shown, to extend, abridge or vary the prescribed time.

### **5.16.2 Applicable Law**

These Regulations shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the Laws of the Republic of Ireland.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **GUIDELINES FOR HEARING COMMITTEES.**

#### **A. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE/JUDICIAL OFFICER**

A.1. The procedure in Disciplinary cases may include the following (which normally may be dealt with in the sequence set out below): -

- a) At the commencement of the meeting the chairman should explain the procedures to be followed and introduce each member of the hearing committee to the player and his representatives;
- b) Confirm the player's name and identification, that he was the player sent off or cited and that he has received a copy of the Match Official's Report and /or Citation as appropriate;
- c) A player should be offered the opportunity to acknowledge his culpability or otherwise in relation to the offence;
- d) At all meetings of the hearing committee, the committee, the referee, the match official (if appropriate), and the Player, shall be entitled to call such witnesses and put forward such evidence including Video evidence as may be relevant provided always that no witness may remain at the hearing without the express approval of the hearing committee;
- e) The hearing committee shall have absolute discretion as to whether or not to receive and view video evidence and in deciding whether any evidence put forward is relevant;
- f) Receive the comments of the player and his representatives, (if any);
- g) In the event of the evidence given by the player disputing or conflicting with the report of the referee or any other witness, the player or his representatives shall be entitled to question the referee or any other witness;
- h) Consideration of the evidence by the hearing committee after all the other parties have left the meeting;
- i) Making and promulgation of the hearing committee's decision.

A.2.

- a) The chairman of the hearing committee should hand or send to the player, as soon as practicable, a notice in writing informing him of the decision reached which notice should, include advice to the player of his right of appeal to the committee of appeal within fourteen days of receipt of the written decision. The chairman should also verbally advise the player of that right. The Secretary of the Branch or the Disciplinary Officer of the Union as appropriate should notify the player's club in writing of the decision and of the right to appeal., and if the player is U18, a copy should go to the players parents/guardian.
- b) If a complaint is submitted in relation to an U18 player/team or people associated with an U18 team, then the person receiving the complaint must consult with the Branch Welfare Officer before taking any further action. This determines if the complaint should be dealt with as a disciplinary matter or is a safeguarding issue.
- c) In the event of the hearing having been dealt with in the absence of the player, the secretary of the Branch or the Disciplinary Officer of the Union, as appropriate, shall notify the player of

the decision of the hearing committee immediately thereafter by sending the notice of (i) the decision to him and (ii) his right of appeal. The secretary of the player's club shall also be notified of the decision.

A.3. The hearing committee should meet as soon as possible and preferably within six days of a player's dismissal taking place.

## **B. COMMITTEE OF APPEAL**

B.1. The Committee of Appeal has all the powers, procedural and otherwise, entitlements, obligations and discretions contained in the Union's Regulations.

B.2 The following additional procedural guidelines shall apply to the conduct of appeals: -

- a) Prior to the hearing, the chairman of the hearing committee may require any party to the proceeding to identify its submissions and contentions in the appeal and/or to respond to the other parties' submissions and contentions. In addition, where practicable, written submissions and evidence shall be provided to the hearing committee and exchanged by the parties prior to the hearing;
- b) Where the appellant appeals against a sanction and or an order for costs only, the appellant may request that the hearing committee review the sanction without the need for the appellant to appear personally at the hearing. If the chairman of the hearing committee decides that the appellant need not appear personally at the hearing, then the appellant and any other party to proceedings shall be entitled to make representations in writing to the hearing committee;
- c) The hearing committee shall be entitled to conduct and regulate the appeal proceedings as it sees fit in the circumstances of the case. The said committee shall determine the procedure and basis on which an appeal will proceed. In relation to any issues of fact, it may refer to the record of proceedings before the hearing committee that made the decision being challenged on appeal and may, in its discretion, rehear the whole or any part of the evidence given in the said proceedings. Save where the Committee of Appeal decides to hear the entire case de novo, the appellant shall have the burden of proving that the decision being challenged was in error and should be overturned or varied;
- d) The Committee of Appeal shall have discretion to receive additional new evidence not given to the hearing committee whose decision is being appealed against, provided that the party offering the evidence shows that it was not, on reasonable enquiry, available at the time of the earlier proceedings and hearing;
- (e) Save where otherwise directed by the hearing committee, all parties that were present at the hearing committee whose decision is being appealed against should attend the hearing before the Committee of Appeal, with all of their respective witnesses and other evidence. For the avoidance of doubt, however, the absence of a party at any hearing before the Committee of Appeal shall not, in itself, prevent that committee from proceeding to a decision in the matter. The committee of Appeal shall have absolute discretion whether to receive written submissions by or on behalf of such absentee(s);
- f) At the hearing the following guidelines should apply: -

- (i) The chairman of the committee shall introduce the members of the committee to the parties. He shall then read out the notice of appeal, prior to explaining the procedure to be followed;
  - (ii) The appellant shall be invited to make submissions and (where appropriate) call witnesses;
  - (iii) The other party or parties to the appeal shall be invited to make submissions and (where appropriate) call witnesses;
  - (iv) The parties shall each make brief concluding submissions;
  - (v) The committee shall retire to deliberate in private.
- g) In any case where a witness required by the Committee of Appeal refuses or fails to attend before the Committee, the Committee may, in its absolute discretion, refuse to allow the evidence of that witness to be given in any other form.

## **C. GENERAL**

- C.1. Each case must be treated on its merits and any sanction imposed must be seen to be fair and equitable and in accordance with the circumstances of the individual case.
- C.2. The players' disciplinary record during his playing career from the age of 18 should be reflected in the sanction imposed.
- C.3. The player may not play the game anywhere during the period of a suspension.
- C.4. Any suspension must be imposed until a stated date which should be fixed after taking into consideration all consequences of such suspension.
- C.5. If a player's suspension has not terminated by the end of the playing season, he will be required to complete the suspension at the beginning of the next season unless he has been selected for a close season tour or he intends to play during the close season in another Union. In these cases, the period of the tour or the playing season in the visited Union must be included in determining when his suspension ends.
- C6. Should a player receive two yellow cards in one match then the following outcomes are suggested, however each case is dealt with on its own merits.
- a) Two Technical Yellow Cards - sending off sufficient
  - b) One Technical Yellow Card and one Foul Play Yellow Card – sending off sufficient
  - c) Two Foul Play Yellow Cards - one week suspension
- C7. For the purposes of imposing a suspension, Disciplinary Committees and Judicial Officers shall take into account weeks in which there is a Match(es) which the Player would otherwise have been scheduled to play in the Match, the burden resting with the Player to prove that he was scheduled to play. Where the Player was scheduled to play in more than one Match in a week (for example, a mid-week fixture) this week still only counts as one week of the suspension save in certain situations normally associated with the professional game. Disciplinary Committees and Judicial Officers shall take into account that a one-week period of suspension shall ordinarily result in a player missing one match. In determining the length of the suspension, consideration shall be given to the playing consequences of such a suspension and shall exclude:
- a) Any close season periods of inactivity or periods when the player is not fit, available or expected to play.



- C8. For players under the age of 18, they are entitled to have their parent/guardian as an observer in addition to their representatives. For cases U18 years a safeguarding assessment will have already taken place to ensure no safeguarding issues are outstanding.
- C9. In the event of the evidence given by the player disputing or conflicting with the report of the referee or any other witness, the player or his representatives shall be entitled to clarify items with the referee or any other witness through the Chairperson.
- C10. The hearing committee should meet as soon as possible and preferably within six days of a player's dismissal taking place.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **SANCTIONING POLICY**

Once it has been established that a Player has committed an act of Illegal and/or Foul Play and the question of sanction is to be considered, the following must be applied in conjunction with the regulations applying to the match. The Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer shall apply World Rugby's sanctions for Foul Play as set out in Regulation 17 (found here as Appendix 3)

1. Establish what is the appropriate description for the particular act of Illegal and/or Foul Play having regard to the World Rugby recommended sanctions.
2. In determining the sanction, it is first necessary to establish the seriousness of the players offending by reference and consideration to the following:
  - (a) intentional, namely with deliberate action;
  - (b) reckless, namely where the player's actions were not intentional but were careless and the risk of committing an act of Illegal and/or Foul Play was, or should have been apparent. The Player knew or should have known that there was a risk of committing an act of foul play.
  - (c) the nature of the actions, the manner in which the offence was committed including part of body used (for example, fist, elbow, knee or boot);
  - (d) the existence of provocation;
  - (e) whether the Player acted in retaliation and the timing of such;
  - (f) whether the Player acted in self-defence (that is whether the Player used a reasonable degree of force in defending himself);
  - (g) the effect of the Player's actions on the victim (for example, extent of injury, removal of victim Player from the game);

- (h) the effect of the Player's actions on the Match;
  - (i) the vulnerability of the victim Player including part of victim's body involved/affected, position of the victim Player, ability to defend himself;
  - (j) the level of participation in the offending and level of premeditation;
  - (k) whether the conduct of the offending Player was completed or amounted to an attempt; and
  - (l) any other feature of the Player's conduct in relation to or connected with the offending.
3. Weigh up your decisions under 1 and 2 and in doing so make a firm decision as to the seriousness of the incident and declare it to be either: -
- (a) low-end;
  - (b) mid-point; or
  - (c) top-end in the range.

This is now your entry point in the World Rugby list of recommended sanctions.

4. Now consider any mitigation – is there a reason to decrease the sanction? Reasons could include:
- (a) the presence and timing of an acknowledgement of culpability/wrong-doing by the offending Player;
  - (b) the Player's disciplinary record and/or good character;
  - (c) the youth and inexperience of the Player;
  - (d) the Player's conduct prior to and at the hearing
  - (e) the Player having demonstrated remorse for his/her conduct to the victim Player including the timing of such remorse; and
  - (f) any other off-field mitigating factor(s) that the Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer considers relevant and appropriate.

Where these factors exist come down in the range applicable to the description by an appropriate amount and fix at an appropriate point.

5. Now consider any aggravation - is there a reason to increase the sanction? Aggravating factors include:
- a) the Player's status generally as an offender of the Laws of the Game
  - b) the need for a deterrent to combat a pattern of offending in the Game where the teams participating in the Match or Tournament have been put on notice that such a need exists; and
  - c) any other off-field aggravating factor(s) that the Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer considers relevant and appropriate (including poor conduct prior to or at the hearing).

Where these factors exist come down in the range applicable to the description by an appropriate amount and fix at an appropriate point. You have now arrived at your sanction.

**Notes:**

Subject to note 2 below, for acts of Foul Play the Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer cannot apply a greater reduction than 50% of the relevant entry point suspension (prior to any increase for aggravating factors). In assessing the percentage reduction applicable for mitigating factors, the Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer shall start at 0% reduction and apply the amount, if any, to be allowed as mitigation up to the maximum 50% reduction.

In cases involving offending that has been classified pursuant to World Rugby Regulation 17.18.1 as lower end offending, where:

- (a) there are off-field mitigating factors; and
- (a) where the Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer considers that the sanction would be wholly disproportionate to the level and type of offending involved;

the Disciplinary Committee or Judicial Officer may apply sanctions less than 50% of the lower end entry sanctions specified in Appendix 1 including in appropriate cases no sanction.

## Appendix 3

## WORLD RUGBY SANCTIONS FOR FOUL PLAY (REGULATION 17)

**Note:** Any act of foul play which results in contact with the head and/or the neck shall result in at least a mid-range sanction (see note 5)

**Note:** Where a Player receives a mid-range or top end sanction, a Disciplinary Committee/Judicial Officer/Appeal Committee/Appeal Officer may, at its discretion, agree that one week of the sanction may be replaced by a “Coaching Intervention” that complies with the World Rugby Coaching Intervention Programme (see note 6)

### 9.11 Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others.

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

### 9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to:

Biting	Low-end: 12 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 18 weeks/matches	Top-end: 24+ weeks/matches	Max: 208 weeks/matches
Intentional Contact with Eye(s) <sup>7</sup>	Low-end: 12 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 18 weeks/matches	Top-end: 24+ weeks/matches	Max: 208 weeks/matches
Reckless Contact with Eye(s) <sup>8</sup>	Low-end: 6 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 12 weeks/matches	Top-end: 18+ weeks/matches	Max: 208 weeks/matches
Contact with Eye Area <sup>9</sup>	Low-end: 4 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 8 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Punching or striking with hand, arm (including stiff-arm tackle), elbow or shoulder	Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Leading with the forearm	Low end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Striking with head <sup>10</sup>	Low-end: 6 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 10 weeks/matches	Top-end: 16+ weeks/matches	Max: 104 weeks/matches
Striking with knee	Low-end: 4 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 8 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches

<sup>5</sup> The note does not apply to the following Laws whose low-end entry points already take into account head contact being a potential feature or consequence of such breach reaching the red-card threshold: 9.12 (biting, contact with eye(s)/eye area and striking with head), 9.18 and 9.27 (hair pulling).

<sup>6</sup> The World Rugby Coaching Intervention Programme is only available for foul play offences occurring under the “Head Contact Process”

<sup>7</sup> The “eye” involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the “eye area” is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

<sup>8</sup> The “eye” involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the “eye area” is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

<sup>9</sup> The “eye” involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the “eye area” is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

<sup>10</sup> Head-on-head contact arising out of a tackle situation should ordinarily be sanctioned under Law 9.13 below.

Stamping or Trampling	Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Tripping	Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 4 weeks/matches	Top-end: 8+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Kicking	Low-end: 4 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 8 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches

**9.12 A player must not verbally abuse anyone. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.**

Low-end: 6 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 12 weeks/matches	Top-end: 18+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.13 A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.**

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.14 A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.**

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.15 Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.**

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 4 weeks/matches	Top-end: 6+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.16 A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.**

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.17 A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.**

Low-end: 4 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 8 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.18 A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.**

Low-end: 6 matches/matches	Mid-range: 10 weeks/matches	Top-end: 14+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

---

**9.19 Dangerous play in a scrum.**

- a. The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them.
- b. A front-row player must not pull an opponent.
- c. A front-row player must not intentionally lift an opponent off their feet or force the opponent upwards out of the scrum.
- d. A front-row player must not intentionally collapse a scrum.

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 4 weeks/matches	Top-end: 8+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.20 Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.**

- a. A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

- b. A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders.
- c. A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul.

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 4 weeks/matches	Top-end: 8+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.25 A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.**

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 6 weeks/matches	Top-end: 10+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.27 A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship including but not limited to:**

Hair pulling or grabbing	Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 4 weeks/matches	Top-end: 6+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Spitting at anyone	Low-end: 4 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 8 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
Grabbing, twisting or squeezing the genitals (and/or breasts in the case of female players)	Low-end: 12 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 18 weeks/matches	Top-end: 24+ weeks/matches	Max: 208 weeks/matches
Other	Low-end: 4 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 8 weeks/matches	Top-end: 12+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches

**9.28 A player must not disrespect the authority of a Match Official.**

Low-end: 2 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 4 weeks/matches	Top-end: 6+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.28 A player must not verbally abuse a Match Official. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.**

Low-end: 6 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 12 weeks/matches	Top-end: 18+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.28 A player must not make physical contact with Match Officials.**

Low-end: 6 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 12 weeks/matches	Top-end: 18+ weeks/matches	Max: 52 weeks/matches
-----------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------

**9.28 A player must not use threatening actions or words towards Match Officials.**

Low-end: 12 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 24 weeks/matches	Top-end: 48+ weeks/matches	Max: 260 weeks/matches
------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------

**9.28 A player must not physically abuse Match Officials.**

Low-end: 24 weeks/matches	Mid-range: 48 weeks/matches	Top-end: 96+ weeks/matches	Max: Life
------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------

In respect of offences not referred to in Appendix 1 above, appropriate sanctions may be imposed at the discretion of the relevant Judicial Officer, Disciplinary Committee, Appeal Officer and/or Appeal Committee (as the case may be).

Notwithstanding the Sanctions in Appendix 1 and/or the provisions of Regulations 17.17 to 17.21 in cases where the player's actions constitute mid-range or top end offending for any type of offence which had the potential to result and, in fact, did result in serious/gross consequences to the health of the victim, the Judicial Officers and/or Disciplinary Committees may impose any period of suspension including a suspension for life.

**WORLD RUGBY SANCTIONS FOR FOUL PLAY (REGULATION 17)**  
**ADJUSTED FOR UNDERAGE RUGBY**

**Note:** Any act of foul play which results in contact with the head and/or the neck shall result in at least a mid-range sanction<sup>12</sup>.

**9.11 Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

**9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to:**

<b>Biting</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 8 matches	Top-end: 12 + matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 8 matches	Mid-range: 10 matches	Top-end: 14+ matches
<b>Intentional contact with Eye(s)<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 8 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 8 matches	Mid-range: 10 matches	Top-end: 14+ matches
<b>Reckless contact with Eye(s)<sup>14</sup></b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches
<b>Contact with Eye Area<sup>15</sup></b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches
<b>Punching or striking with hand, arm (including stiff-arm tackle), elbow or shoulder</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>Leading with the forearm</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches
<b>Striking with head<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches
<b>Striking with knee</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

<sup>12</sup> The note does not apply to the following Laws whose low-end entry points already take into account head contact being a potential feature or consequence of such breach reaching the red-card threshold: 9.12 (biting, contact with eye(s)/eye area and striking with head), 9.18 and 9.27 (hair pulling).

<sup>13</sup> The "eye" involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the "eye area" is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

<sup>14</sup> The "eye" involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the "eye area" is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

<sup>15</sup> The "eye" involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the "eye area" is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

<sup>16</sup> Head-on-head contact arising out of a tackle situation should ordinarily be sanctioned under Law 9.13 below.



	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches
<b>Stamping or Trampling</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches
<b>Tripping</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>Kicking</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches

**9.12 A player must not verbally abuse anyone. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexualorientation.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 8 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches

**9.13 A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches

**9.14 A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches

**9.15 Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

**9.16 A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches

**9.17 A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches

**9.18 A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches

**9.19 Dangerous play in a scrum.**

- a. The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them.
- b. A front-row player must not pull an opponent.
- c. A front-row player must not intentionally lift an opponent off their feet or force the opponent upwards out of the scrum.
- d. A front-row player must not intentionally collapse a scrum.

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: warning <sup>17</sup>	Mid-range: 1 match	Top-end: 2+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches

**9.20 Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.**

- a. A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

- b. A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders.

- c. A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

**9.25. A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches

**9.27 A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship including but not limited to:**

<b>Hair pulling or grabbing</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>Spitting at anyone</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches
<b>Grabbing, twisting or squeezing the genitals (and/or breasts in the case of female players)</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 6 matches	Mid-range: 12 matches	Top-end: 18+ matches
<b>Other</b>	<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
	<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches

<sup>17</sup> A Warning shall form part of the Players disciplinary record while at Underage level but not extend into their senior disciplinary record.

**9.28 A player must not disrespect the authority of a Match Official**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches

**9.28 A player must not verbally abuse a Match Official. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches

**9.28 A player must not make physical contact with Match Officials.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches

**9.28 A player must not use threatening actions or words towards Match Officials.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 6 matches	Mid-range: 12 matches	Top-end: 24+ matches

**9.28 A player must not physically abuse Match Officials.**

<b>Up to U15s Sanction</b>	Low-end: 6 matches	Mid-range: 12 matches	Top-end: 24+ matches
<b>U16 to U18 Sanction</b>	Low-end: 12 matches	Mid-range: 24 matches	Top-end: 48+ matches

## Links to Forms and Documents

Code of Conduct.....	<a href="#">World Rugby Code of Conduct</a>
Safeguarding Case Assessment.....	<a href="#">IRFU Safeguarding</a>
Spirit of Rugby Charter.....	<a href="#">IRFU Spirit of Rugby Charter</a>
IRFU Club Citing Form .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
IRFU Appeal Form .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
IRFU Complaint Form .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
IRFU Discipline Panel Judgement Form .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
IRFU Player Directions Form .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
IRFU Player Directions Form (Youth) .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
Player Guide to Disciplinary Hearings .....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
World Rugby Regulation 17 – Discipline.....	<a href="#">World Rugby Regulation 17</a>
World Rugby Regulation 18 – Misconduct and Code of Conduct...	<a href="#">World Rugby Regulation 18</a>
Regulation 17 Full Sanctioning procedure.....	<a href="#">IrishRugby.ie Discipline</a>
IRFU Regulations.....	<a href="#">IRFU Regulations</a>