

Ballarat Golf Club

Code of Conduct Policy

30th January, 2024

Introduction

The Vision Statement for the Ballarat Golf Club states that the 'Club will strive to be an outstanding golf and social destination, service oriented and responsive to members and guest.' While much of this outstanding golfing experience will be attributable to the overall quality of the course and its associated facilities, the Club is committed to ensuring that members, staff, guests and contractors experience a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment.

Members, guests, staff, and contractors of the Club have a right to:

- be treated with fairness and respect
- participate in an environment free from all forms of harassment, abuse, bullying, misconduct and discrimination
- have their privacy and confidentiality protected.

While all members, guests, staff and contractors of the club have these rights, they also have an obligation to support a positive club environment by being proactive in reporting inappropriate behaviour when it is experienced or observed.

The Code of Conduct has been developed to provide clarity as to behaviour that is acceptable and behaviour that will not be tolerated within the Club.

The Code also acknowledges the Club's commitment to being a family friendly environment, where appropriate, and respectful behaviour is the expected norm.

Terminology used to describe unacceptable behaviour has been drawn from the *National Integrity Framework, Member Protection Policy*, Golf Australia, July 1, 2022. The link to this document can be accessed [here](#) and provides useful definitions of key words.

Code of Conduct

Every member, staff, guest and contractor of the Ballarat Golf Club should strive to ensure and / or support:

- Inclusion of every person regardless of their age, gender or sexual orientation
- Inclusion of every person regardless of their race, culture or religion
- Opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in golf and club events
- Respect towards others, the Club and the broader community
- Adherence to the principles of fair play, the rules of golf, the traditions of the game, golf etiquette and the spirit of competition
- The safety and wellbeing of others

- Care and respect for the Club's facilities

Acts of violence, discrimination and vilification are illegal acts within Victoria. It is the Ballarat Golf Club's responsibility not only to report these to the appropriate authorities but to ensure that these acts are not tolerated by the Club. The following behaviours are considered breaches of the Club Code and are prohibited:

- Violence, abusive or bullying behaviour towards another person
- Unlawful discrimination against another person based on their age, gender or sexual orientation
- Harassment or vilification of any kind towards another person
- Unlawful discrimination against another person based on their race, culture, religion or any other personal characteristic
- Sexual harassment or intimidation of another person
- Victimisation of another person for exercising their rights through the Code of Conduct
- Inappropriate behaviour including the use of offensive language and gestures that are demeaning or offensive to others
- Failure to maintain a safe environment
- Behaviour that shows disregard for the rules of golf, golf etiquette or the traditions of the game
- Failure to respect the Club's facilities

In general, it is unacceptable at the Ballarat Golf Club to show disregard for other persons, the rules of golf or the traditions of the game. It is also unacceptable to not follow reasonable instruction from Club staff /contractors or to criticise or instruct Club staff / contractors on the performance of their duties.

Reporting a Code of Conduct Breach

It is the responsibility of all members, guests, staff or contractors of the Ballarat Golf Club to report all breaches of the Code of Conduct directly to the General Manager of the Club. A report needs to be submitted if you are either the victim of such a breach, or an observer of behaviour that you believe constitutes a breach of the Code.

An electronic Breach of Code form may be obtained through the Ballarat Golf Club website or, alternatively a hard copy may be obtained through the office reception or the Club's Pro Shop. All reports need to be submitted in a timely manner.

In the event, that the breach is reported by a staff member, then they will be eligible to receive financial compensation for the time required to complete the report.

Procedure for Dealing with a Breach of Conduct Report

The General Manager is responsible for implementation of the Code. All Code of Conduct Reports will initially be investigated by the General Manager. The purpose of the initial investigation will be to determine the following:

- Clarity of the breach by formally contacting the author of the received report and validating the content

- Validation of the report from listed witnesses and /or CCTV footage where available

If, at the end of this initial investigation, the General Manager forms the opinion that the behaviour constitutes a breach of Victorian State Law then the report, and all other collected material, will be handed over to the Victorian Police. The accused will have either their membership or access to the Club immediately suspended until such time as the investigation is completed and outcome determined. The Club reserves the right to enforce Club-based sanctions beyond any external findings to be determined by the General Manager in accordance with this Code.

If, at the end of the initial investigation, the General Manager forms the opinion that the behaviour is a clear breach of the Club's Code of Conduct, but not a breach of Victoria Law, then the accused will be requested, in writing, to attend a formal meeting with Club representatives. Prior to the meeting the alleged offender will be advised, in writing, of the behaviour breach that has been reported and the option to bring a support person to the meeting. The meeting will be attended by the General Manager and two Directors of the Club. Every effort will be made to ensure that the composition of the Club representatives will be sensitive to gender representation.

All witness statements provided in support of the initial report, must be in written format and signed as true and correct by the witnesses. If the General Manager takes a verbal statement via phone or in person, a summary of that statement is to be prepared in writing and provided to the witness for confirmation that the summary is correct and then signed / verified as true and correct by the witness. This confirmation could be confirmed via email that the statement is an accurate reflection of the discussion with the General Manager and confirmed as true and correct by the witness.

All assigned delegates, in addition to the General Manager, are to be provided with a copy of all written statements from the initial source of the complaint and any witnesses for their knowledge, prior to a formal meeting.

The sole purpose of the formal meeting will be to determine the accuracy and severity of the behaviour breach. At the end of the formal meeting one of four possible outcomes will be reached:

- The behaviour does not breach the Code of Conduct
- The behaviour is considered minor and a formal warning letter is issued
- The behaviour is considered a significant breach and a letter of club suspension is issued
- The behaviour is considered a major breach and membership of or attendance at the Club withdrawn

All correspondence, in relation to all Code of Conduct breaches, are the direct responsibility of the General Manager.

If a report is considered by the General Manager to be vexatious or malicious, this will in itself be considered to be a breach of the Code.

Right of Appeal

All members, staff, guests and contractors have a right to appeal disciplinary action that has led to either suspension or membership removal from the Ballarat Golf Club. A disciplinary appeal will only be available to members, or guests after a written request has been received by the Club within seven days of the initial disciplinary action. The written request must provide a clear and comprehensive rationale as to why an additional disciplinary appeal is warranted. All disciplinary appeals will be heard within ten days of receipt of the written request.

All appeals will be heard by a four-member panel;

- two Directors of the Ballarat Golf Club
- two invited members of the Ballarat Golf Club who have a demonstrated knowledge, or experience, in hearing such appeals.

Composition of the Appeals Panel will not include anyone:

- appointed to the initial disciplinary subcommittee to hear and determine the matter of the member concerned; or
- have a personal interest in the dispute; or
- is biased in favour of, or against, the member concerned,
- and will be sensitive to gender representation.

The appeals panel will be afforded five days to reach its decision, the decision is upheld if a majority of the persons voting at the appeal vote in favour of the decision, and this decision will be considered final.

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