

## POLICY ON COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to report grievances against match officials, administrators, assignors, instructors or assessors for unethical conduct, misuse or abuse of authority, conflict of interest or misconduct at a match or away from a match. "Match Officials" includes referees, assistant referees, 4<sup>th</sup> officials or others appointed to assist in officiating a match.

Conduct of all above individuals, hereinafter referred to as "officials" is covered under the policies of the United States Soccer Federation, "the Federation", Florida State Referees, "FSR", and the appropriate State Association in whose sanctioned match the alleged incident occurred.

This policy is published in an effort to minimize on field abuse toward game officials, verbally or otherwise, and provide a forum for grievances involving breaches of the Laws of the Game, "LOTG", and ethical conduct. It is felt that a written complaint is much more effective than on the field negative activity.

Grievances against officials must clearly state the exact Laws of the Game or ethical violation. General grievances addressing match officials' discretionary authority as established by the Laws of the Game will not and can not be considered. A match official appointed to that match, under the Laws of the Game, has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game along with a high degree of discretion which the match official must apply for the good of the game. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, under the Laws of the Game, are final.

The grievance must be in writing, clearly identifying the official against whom it is brought, the match or incident in question, be accompanied by a money order in the non-refundable amount of \$100 dollars payable to "Florida State Referees" and be filed with the State Referee Administrator at the address below. If the grievance does not meet the requirements detailed in this policy or it is not accompanied by the appropriate money order, it will be returned less the non-refundable fee.

The written grievance must indicate specifically and in detail, the nature or act of the misconduct. Clarity and non emotional simplicity in the written grievance will lead to better understanding of the events and will be used as a guide to further action.

Each grievance must include the following:

- The specific Law of the Game or ethical standard(s) that has been violated. If the LOTG has more than one section or subsection then the specific section or subsection must be noted and quoted.
- The exact detail of how this specific LOTG was violated must be provided.
- Each grievance must be separately and specifically documented by the facts and/or actions of the official.

- Grievance(s) must be organized so that the State Referee Administrator can easily understand and follow them. FSR is not responsible for searching through submitted documents in an attempt to identify the grievance(s).
- Grievance(s) must provide enough detail to determine if there are grounds to follow through.
- Grievance(s) must be filed in a timely manner. In general, the guideline is thirty (30) days from the date of the incident giving rise to the grievance(s). This is not a hard and fast limit, but (beyond this period) a good explanation must be given for the delay.
- Each grievance will be reviewed on its own merits and not to be associated with other alleged grievances of which there was previous knowledge but no action was taken at the time.
- The person bringing the grievance must be clearly identifiable and be prepared to follow through if a hearing is warranted. FSR will not prosecute the complaint; it only provides the resolution forum.

In the event the grievance is the result of a youth or adult match, all requirements and provisions of the sanctioning state association must be followed by the person filing the grievance. FSR will follow all provisions of the sanctioning state association if a determination is made that the grievance(s) has merits and needs to proceed to the next step.

All written grievances, accompanied by the appropriate money order, must be mailed to:  
State Referee Administrator  
Florida State Referees  
6671 W Indiantown Road  
Suite 305  
Jupiter, FL 33458