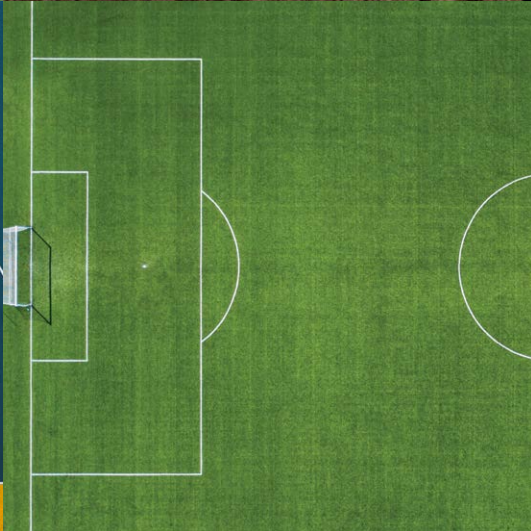
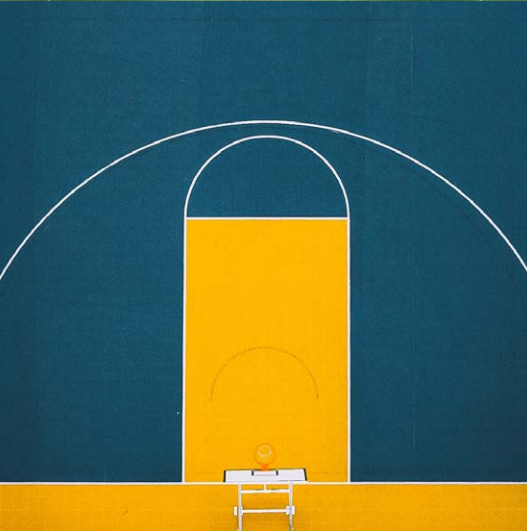
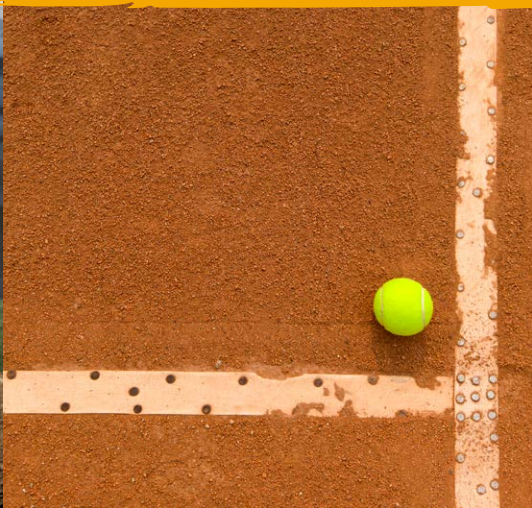
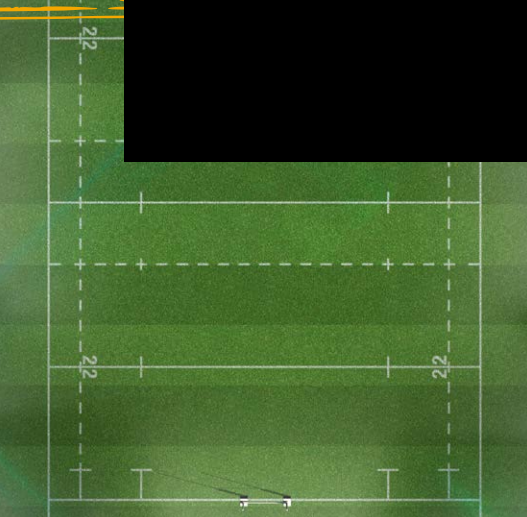


**RACISM.
IT STOPS
WITH ME**

**RACISM.
NOBODY WINS.**

**GUIDE TO RACISM
COMPLAINTS HANDLING
POLICY**



**Australian
Human Rights
Commission**

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FOREWORD

The handling of complaints about racism and racial discrimination received by your organisation may be categorised as either informal or formal; depending on the nature of the complaint, the circumstances, and the wishes of the person/s targeted. The action taken by your organisation will need to take into consideration the severity and circumstances of the complaint, the wishes of the targeted person/s, along with the organisation's policies and procedures. As complaints are investigated and more evidence emerges, escalation of the issue may be appropriate, and all parties involved must be notified and kept informed throughout the process.

CORE PRINCIPLES

Regardless of the nature of the incident, all complaints should be handled with consideration of the following principles:

- Centring the targeted person/s and their experience, acting in accordance with the principles of a trauma-informed approach.
- The process should be managed in an efficient and timely manner, avoiding unnecessary delays.
- Keeping confidentiality in mind, act with transparency in all dealings, including the disclosure of all relevant information, progress and decisions. In addition, providing the person making the complaint with a copy of the organisation's Member Protection Policy and Codes of Behaviour and explaining how these documents relate to the issue/concern.
- The process should be accessible, easily understood and appropriately available in different languages.
- Allowing for the target/s to withdraw or escalate the process at any time, and retain control of the process.
- Maintaining impartiality in the management of the complaint ensuring each party to the complaint has an opportunity to present their perspective and the opportunity to respond to any matters raised.
- Adhering to the principles of confidentiality and conducting all meetings and discussions in locations or places that are private or away from others.
- Keeping all parties involved informed throughout the process and communicating all developments, changes and decisions as soon as possible.
- Always offering support to all parties involved and ensuring that access to culturally appropriate and accessible supports are available.
- Ensuring that the person/s tasked with dealing with complaints are appropriately trained and supported.

In all matters, the choice of an informal or formal process to resolving complaints is always retained by the targeted person/s. There are benefits and limitations to each process, and it is important that the complainant feels comfortable to pursue either option without fear of repercussion.

INFORMAL PROCESSES

The informal complaints handling process should only be carried out when requested by the targeted person/s. The informal process should only occur when there are no other mitigating factors influencing the targeted person/s decision to proceed informally, such as pressure to maintain relationships, fear of repercussions or organisational cultures. Informal processes may also be appropriate when the incident or issue involves children or young people, and the parents/guardians request informal resolution. It is important to ensure that the targeted person/s are provided information and support around escalating the complaint at any stage.

Play by the Rules¹ has further information about informal complaint handling processes and can be accessed at: <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/complaints-handling/complaints-procedures-discrimination>

FORMAL PROCESSES

The formal complaints handling process may be appropriate in situations of racism and racial discrimination, where the target has requested a formal process.

Issues/incidents that involve aggression, threats or threatening behaviour, bullying, vilification, physical altercations or unlawful actions are examples where the formal complaints process is the most appropriate, and can be requested at any time by the complainant.

The target/s retain the right to discontinue a complaint at any stage of the process. However, it is important to recognise and respond to other factors that may be influencing the targets decision to withdraw from the process, such as further victimisation.

Play by the Rules² has further information about formal complaint handling processes can be accessed at: <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/complaints-handling/complaints-procedures-discrimination>

ENDNOTES

¹Play by The Rules, *Informal Process Fact Sheet* (Fact Sheet, August 2020)
<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/complaints-handling/complaints-procedures-discrimination>

²Play by The Rules, *Formal Process Fact Sheet* (Fact Sheet, September 2020)
<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/complaints-handling/complaints-procedures-discrimination>

RACISM.
NOBODY WINS.

ABN 47 996 232 602
GPO Box 5218,
Sydney NSW 2001

General enquiries
1300 369 711

National Info Service
1300 656 419
TTY 1800 620 241

Human Rights Commission
www.humanrights.gov.au

This resource has been created by the Australian Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with national, state and territory-based sporting organisations and venues. For additional resources and information about the project, please visit <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/publications/guide-addressing-spectator-racism-sports-2021>.