



## **REPORTING DISCRIMINATION**

This guide is designed to give some general information and assistance to people who are thinking about reporting, or have already reported, an incident of racism or other discrimination to the Sussex County Football Association.

We hope the information provided answers any questions you may have about reporting discrimination.

### **Making a report**

When reporting an incident it is important to provide as much detail as possible about what happened. We recognise that the process can be difficult, and sometimes distressing, but it is vital that you mention key pieces of information. Some of the facts that we will want to establish are as follows:

- Where and when did the incident(s) take place?
- What exactly happened?
- Who said/did what to whom?
- What are the relationships/roles of the parties involved in the incident?
- How close were you to the incident and did you have an unobstructed view?
- Did you witness the incident first-hand or was it reported to you – if so, by whom?
- What are the names and/or descriptions of those involved in the incident, including other possible witnesses?
- What happened after the incident and has it been reported to anyone else e.g. the police?
- Is there anything else we should know – e.g. past history between the parties?

This list of questions is not exhaustive. However, it should provide a good guide to the type of information which is needed for the matter to be assessed properly.

### **Confidentiality**

All investigations are confidential and any information relating to an investigation will not be released to the public unless or until charges are brought. Of course, anyone who contacts us can choose to remain anonymous (see below). However, should another agency (e.g. the police) be involved in investigating the same incident, we may seek to share information with that agency.

### **Sharing information**

We may share information with other organisations, although permission to do so will always be sought from you where necessary. Equally, we may put an investigation on hold pending the result of another agency's inquiry – this is most likely when the police are involved in the matter.

### **Your questions answered**

**Q: Can I make a report anonymously?**

**A:** Yes. You do not have to give your name when reporting an incident of racism or other discrimination. However, if an anonymous person is the only witness, we are likely to find it difficult to take formal action against the alleged offender.



**Q: Once I make a report, what happens next?**

**A:** The details reported will be assessed by an officer of the Sussex County Football Association who will review the information provided and decide on the appropriate course of action. This will involve deciding, where necessary, who should investigate the allegation – this may be the Sussex County Football Association, The FA, the police, etc. Once this decision has been made, you will be contacted and the process will be explained.

**Q: Who will contact me once my report has been reviewed?**

**A:** A member of the Sussex County Football Association will contact you in the first instance although, ultimately, it could be The FA or another agency that deals with the complaint. If you have a preferred method for communications (i.e. telephone, letter, etc.) please let us know.

**Q: How long can I expect to wait before I am contacted?**

**A:** We will contact you as soon as reasonably possible, and within at least five working days.

**Q: What is likely to happen to the alleged offender?**

**A:** It is too early to say. Only if any football Rules have been breached and there is sufficient evidence, will disciplinary action be taken, which may lead to some form of sanction. However, this cannot be certain at this stage. The first step is for us to assess the information available and decide on the most appropriate course of action.

**Q: Will I have to give evidence?**

**A:** If it is decided that disciplinary action will be taken against the alleged offender(s), that will usually mean that we charge them and their case is heard by a Disciplinary Commission. In order to do this, we have to have enough evidence to prove what happened. We may therefore ask you to provide a statement, which means that your version of events is written down and you sign the document as an accurate record of the incident you witnessed.

When you provide a statement, it enables us to use this evidence at a disciplinary hearing. It is an important part of the process, and we rely on people being willing to provide evidence to enable us to tackle the problems that are reported. You should note that providing a statement may mean that you will be asked to attend a hearing and give your evidence in person.

## **Contact**

If you wish to report a matter, or you have a query, please contact:

Chief Executive: Ken Benham

Address: SCFA Hq, Culver Road, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 9AX

Telephone: 01903 753547

Fax: 01903 761608

Website: [www.sussexfa.com](http://www.sussexfa.com)

Email: [ken.benham@sussexfa.com](mailto:ken.benham@sussexfa.com)