

# ARANA CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB INC

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

REVISION 2. 18/07/2021

**Note 1:** The Grievance File mentioned in this procedure is confidential and not available outside of the Management Committee. It is kept in a secure location in the office under the control of the Secretary.

**Note 2:** In this procedure the singular can be interpreted as the plural if appropriate.

### 1. OBJECT

**1.1.** To provide an equitable and transparent means to resolve grievances between members.

**1.2.** Address behaviour contrary to the aims and ethos of the Arana Contract Bridge Club Inc.

### 2. PROCEDURE

**2.1.** The procedures outlined in this document will be initiated by the submission of a grievance in writing to the secretary.

**2.2.** In extreme circumstances, e.g., physical violence or continuing serious disruptive behaviour, and where immediate action is necessary, a committee member who witnesses an incident may impose an immediate sanction. Such action will be subject to subsequent investigation and adjudication by the Management Committee, in accordance with this procedure.

**2.3.** If a member of the Management Committee is cited in a grievance, or lodges a grievance, they shall absent themselves from any Management Committee deliberations concerning the grievance.

**2.4. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, the Management Committee, at its discretion, may proceed directly to any of any of the options listed in paragraph 2.11.**

#### 2.5.1 During Play

2.5.1.1. If the problem cannot be resolved by the parties involved, the Director is to be called.

2.5.1.2. The Director will deal with this according to the rules of bridge.

2.5.1.3. If the incident is not resolved, or similar behaviour continues, the Director shall act according to the procedures covering Play.

2.5.1.4. If the incident is not resolved, or similar behaviour continues, as soon as practical after the play session ends the Director shall forward a written report to the club Secretary with a full description of the incident. The report should include witnesses, what was done to try to resolve the incident and all other relevant details. Those affected by the incident should also submit their own written account or a jointly signed account of the incident to the club secretary.

## **2.5.2 Outside of Play**

2.5.2.1. Initially any inappropriate behaviour should be addressed immediately by the affected person and an attempt made to resolve the problem there and then by the parties involved.

2.5.2.2. If the problem is not resolved or similar behaviour continues, the affected person shall notify the club secretary in writing as soon as practical after the incident occurs. The report should name witnesses to the incident, what was done to try to resolve the incident and all other relevant details.

2.5.2.3. Everyone who was affected by the incident should submit a written account or alternatively submit a jointly signed account of the incident.

2.5.2.4. If no written report is submitted, a personal approach may be made by a Management Committee member to try to resolve the problem, but the Management Committee will be unable to act on the grievance.

**2.6.** On receipt of a written grievance the Secretary shall within 7 days:

- Advise the complainant in writing that a copy of the grievance will be forwarded to the respondent.
- Send the respondent a copy of the grievance asking for a response within 7 days.

**2.7.** The Secretary shall take the grievance and response to the next Management Committee meeting for action. If an urgent resolution is required, the Management Committee may deal with the grievance through online communication or a special, rather than wait for the next Management Committee meeting.

**2.8.** If the respondent does not reply within 7 days, the grievance will be dealt with at the next Management Committee meeting without their response.

**2.9.** The original complaint should be investigated by one or more Management Committee members including interviews of any witnesses.

**2.10.** The Management Committee shall then use their discretion on how to proceed. Correspondence In shall record a grievance has been filed but no details are to be disclosed. Details will be recorded in the Grievances File.

## **2.11. Options include in order of priority**

- **Personal Approach:** If acceptable to the complainant, a personal approach by the President (or the President's nominee) will be made to the respondent to try to gain an apology from the respondent and a commitment to change their behaviour.
- **Mediation:** If a personal approach is unsuccessful, proceed to mediation between the two parties.
- **Suspension.**
- **Termination of membership.**

## **2.12. Personal approach**

2.12.1. Within 7 days of receipt by the Secretary of the written grievance, the President (or nominee) should make a personal approach to the respondent to arrange a mutually acceptable meeting time and place to try to resolve the conflict without it escalating.

2.12.2. The President should contact the complainant before this meeting and determine what would be a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

2.12.3. The President (or nominee) and respondent may, at their discretion, elect to have one other person accompany either of them to this meeting.

2.12.5. The President (or nominee) shall document this meeting and its' outcome and file it in the Grievances File.

2.12.6. If the grievance is justified, the offender must be made unambiguously aware that this meeting constitutes a warning.

2.12.7. A brief mention of the outcome is to be recorded in the next monthly Management Committee minutes. Full details are recorded in the Grievance File.

## **2.13. Mediation**

2.13.1. Mediation is a meeting between the complainant and the respondent mediated by a third party. Both parties may request a support person to attend the mediation session.

2.13.2. Mediation will occur if:

- A Personal approach is unsuccessful, or the complainant wishes to go directly to mediation.
- A second and separate grievance is received against the same person.
- The Management Committee decides the matter warrants proceeding directly to mediation.

2.13.3. The Secretary will co-opt an available Committee Member who will facilitate the mediation session.

2.13.4. The Secretary will keep a record of the meeting and record the outcome.

2.13.5. A Committee Member will be excluded from mediation if there is a conflict of interest or previous adverse history with any party to the grievance.

2.13.6. If all Committee Members are objected to, the Secretary will co-opt another member of the club.

2.13.7. At a mutually agreeable date, time and venue, the mediation will be a sit-down discussion with all parties. In most cases a simple negotiation and/or apology or warning will suffice.

2.13.8. If the grievance is justified the respondent must be made aware, unambiguously, that this meeting constitutes a warning.

2.13.9. The result of the mediation will be taken to the Management Committee for official endorsement.

#### **2.14. Suspension**

2.14.1. If the grievance is unresolved after mediation, the matter will be taken to the Management Committee for adjudication.

2.14.2. If the Management Committee decides on suspension, the offender shall be issued, as soon as practical after the decision, a notification to show cause why their membership or playing rights should not be suspended.

2.14.3. The offender can appeal the suspension to the Management Committee at a mutually agreed date, time and place and they may bring one support person. Alternatively, they may decide to only submit a written response.

2.14.4. The suspension remains in force until the final appeal is heard.

2.14.5. After the appeal the decision of the Full Committee Meeting shall be final unless termination of a member's membership of the Arana Contract Bridge Club is the penalty. In this case the offender may appeal at a General Meeting of the whole club (see Constitution – Section 9).

2.14.6. If an offender receives three warnings over three separate grievances, the Management Committee may commence action to terminate or suspend the offender's membership as per the constitution.

#### **2.15. Termination of membership**

2.15.1. If the Management Committee decides on termination of membership, the offender shall be issued, as soon as practical after the decision, a notification to show cause why their membership should not be terminated.

2.15.2. The member may appeal the decision at a General Meeting of the whole club (see Constitution – Section 9).

### 3. APPENDIX- Penalties available

**Grievance Dismissed** – no further action taken.

**Reprimand** – no further action taken.

**Warning** – no further action on the grievance but it is recorded in the grievance file for future reference. 3 warnings may lead to automatic suspension or may lead to termination of membership.

**Probation** – membership or playing rights suspension is deferred for a length of time, at the Management Committee's discretion, for the offender to demonstrate good behaviour. If a grievance is upheld during the probationary period, the suspension will be applied from the date of the grievance during probation.

**Suspension of playing rights at the club** – member can attend club events but not play at normal club sessions. They are permitted to play in events organised externally to the club that are played on club premises. They can vote on club matters.

**Suspension of membership** – the person cannot play at normal club sessions nor attend the club premises unless to play in externally organised events held at the club. They may not vote on club matters during their suspension period.

**Termination of membership** – the person is no longer a club member and access to club premises is banned. They may play at the club as a visitor only at the Management Committee's discretion.