



ATLANTIC RACQUET CENTRE (ARC) COMPLAINTS ABOUT A VOLUNTEER POLICY

How we Manage Concerns or Issues Regarding a Volunteer

Whilst ARC hopes and expects that volunteers will find their volunteering experience happy and rewarding, it is inevitable that problems will arise sometimes. The purpose of this document is to let you know what your manager will do if they have a concern about how things are going.

Principles:

There are a number of principles that we ask volunteers and volunteer managers to consider:

- - Be fair to an individual
- - Be fair to the rest of team (volunteers and staff)
- - Keep the process clear, simple and transparent
- - Volunteering should be mutually beneficial for ARC and the volunteer
- - Treat each other with mutual respect
- - Put reasonable steps in place to support volunteers
- - The process should be regarded as confidential

Informal resolution

Issues are best resolved quickly and informally and we are committed to supporting this to happen locally whenever possible. If your manager has concerns, they will raise them with you at the earliest opportunity. Often things can be quickly sorted out by talking them through at an early stage.

If you are under 18, you should ask someone to come along with you to any meeting with your manager. This could be your parent/guardian, or another volunteer/staff member.

Your manager will share their thoughts on how things are going and invite you to share how things are working from your perspective. This discussion will be based on your role summary description and ARC's values and behaviours. We want you to be clear about our expectations and we are happy to put support in place to help you perform well in the role. This could include training, shadowing, mentoring or in some cases inviting you to consider another role that we feel may suit you better. We hope this initial meeting resolves the issue.

Your manager may agree a date with you for a further meeting, so you can both review how things have progressed and if any further changes are required. Hopefully this is sufficient to enable you to succeed in the role and things proceed smoothly from here.

If your manager feels there are still things that need addressing, they will set a further meeting to review how things are going and

explore what might be happening. At this point, if things are still not working out, your manager will explore other volunteering options with you.

Formal Resolution

In serious cases such as bullying, abuse, harassment, theft, or inappropriate language, your manager will go straight to seeking a formal resolution. ARC has a duty to keep everyone safe and wants to protect its reputation, so we take these incidents seriously. For cases involving child abuse allegations, ARC has a procedure in place to keep everyone safe. Your manager will meet with you, or give you a call, to explain the situation and what will happen. If a complaint has been made against you, we will share the details with you, including the name of the person who has made the complaint. You may be asked to stop volunteering temporarily, whilst the situation is looked in to. In extreme cases, we may have to wait for a police or other external investigation to be carried out, before carrying out our own process.

ARC expects to resolve formal complaints fairly and as quickly as possible. We aim to complete this process within 28 days, unless we have to wait for an external investigation. The manager dealing with the complaint will choose one of the following options to resolve the issue depending on its nature and complexity.

Option 1– your manager will meet you to discuss the issue and if a complaint has been made against you, will share the details. You can bring a friend to this meeting. Out of courtesy, please let your manager know if you are bringing someone and who this is. The manager may have a note taker present, to record the key points. The meeting can be adjourned to collect more facts. At the end of the process the manager will meet you to tell you the outcome and confirm this in writing afterwards. You can appeal the decision (see below).

Option 2– for more complex cases your manager will assign an independent investigating manager to establish the facts and report back with a recommendation. The investigating manager is likely to request a meeting with you to discuss the situation and your view of events. You can bring a friend with you – please let them know who this is. They may have a note taker present to record the key points. They may also meet with witnesses. Witness involvement will be kept to a minimum but any evidence obtained from witnesses will be made available to you. If you wish to submit your own evidence or call any witnesses you must provide details to the investigating manager at least 3 days before the meeting. At the end of the process your manager will meet you to tell you the outcome and confirm this in writing afterwards. You can appeal the decision (see below).

If issues involving allegations of bullying or harassment not previously disclosed, are raised during either option 1 or 2 above, the meeting will be adjourned. If the allegation concerns a member of staff, this will be dealt with under ARC's procedure. For volunteers, this would be dealt with as outlined above. At the end of this process your manager will reconvene the meeting to inform you of the outcome.

If, during the process of establishing the facts, the line manager determines that *disciplinary action is appropriate* for anyone involved (i.e. in cases of misconduct or poor performance) he/she will follow ARC procedures for staff or volunteers, as necessary.

At the end of this process your manager will meet with you to discuss the outcome (respecting the confidentiality of all involved). You can bring a friend to this meeting. Out of courtesy, please let your manager know if you are bringing someone and who this is.

Appeals procedure

If you want to make an appeal against the decision you must do so, in writing or by email, within seven days of the original meeting. You must say why you are appealing for example, new evidence, procedural error etc. Your manager will then appoint someone independent to investigate your appeal. This person will invite you to a meeting to discuss your appeal. Once they have spoken to everyone concerned, you will be invited to a further meeting to hear the outcome. The outcome of this appeal is final.

Additional information


You will be given reasonable notice of the need to attend a formal complaint meeting. If a meeting is postponed because a companion is not available a new date will be set normally within five days.

If your meeting is postponed for any other reason, it will be rearranged as soon as possible, and an alternative method, like telephone or letter, could be used.

You will receive written confirmation of the outcome of the complaint as soon as possible together with details of the appeal process, if you are still not satisfied.

The outcome of any appeal will be confirmed in writing and is final.

This Policy is recommended for approval by:

Signed: 

ARC Chair: Anoushka Lynd

Date: 12/04/2024

Signed: 

Club Welfare Officer: Tish Shere

Date: 12/04/2024