

Code of Conduct – Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Ulster Branch has become increasingly concerned at the levels of misconduct in hockey and believes that “participants” (as defined below) must not act in any way which may prejudice the interests of hockey or bring the game, the Ulster Branch or the Irish Hockey Association, into disrepute. It believes that clubs must take responsibility for, and now actively regulate the behaviour etc of, “participants” during and before and after matches etc under the auspices of the Ulster Branch, and/or of the IHA.

These draft guidelines for the development of a code of conduct are intended to provide a basis to enable clubs, which do not already have an appropriate code of conduct, to develop such a code.

The term “participants” includes:

- players
- team officials (eg coaches, managers, physios etc)
- spectators
- club members

The guidelines do not include references to behaviour on, eg licensed club premises, where clubs may already have appropriate provision in their own rules to deal with instances of misconduct.

The guidelines have taken into account the code of conduct stipulated by the FIH in relation to approved FIH and certain other tournaments, and codes of conduct developed in years past by a number of Ulster clubs.

2. Responsibility

Clubs are responsible and accountable for the behaviour and conduct of participants, who are required to abide by the relevant UBIHA, IHA rules and instructions/directives/guidelines, and where applicable, those of FIH, EHF.

3. Misconduct

In broad terms, the following is regarded as conduct which is improper, unfair and unacceptable:

- verbal/physical abuse or hostility towards any other participant, person or member of the public
- disputing, protesting, reacting in a provocative or disapproving manner towards any decision made by an umpire/official, or otherwise acting in an inappropriate way
- using rude or abusive, racist, sectarian or sexist language or hand signals.

In addition, spectators must not:

- encroach on to the playing area or, where there is a fence around a pitch, go inside it
- watch matches from team dugouts or team officials’ benches
- retaliate if they are subject to provocative behaviour by an opposition spectator or player. Such conduct should be reported to an official of each club involved as soon as possible
- enter umpires’ or opposition dressing rooms unless by invitation or to provide assistance.

4. Public statements

Public statements (include those made in the press, on websites, in emails, radio or television etc) must be fair and reasonable and must not involve a personal attack on another player, umpire, official or club, or any other person or body which could bring the game into disrepute.