

## What you need to know about Tribunals

### BEFORE YOUR HEARING

#### What is a Tribunal Hearing?

Hearings are made up of a panel of 1 to 3 independent members. These members are lawyers and/or ex-players who are experienced in football matters and are independent of FV. They donate their time and are not paid. They hear matters involving on or offfield misconduct, suspensions and member protection matters, and other misconduct offences as per the FV GDT.

#### Why has my case gone to Tribunal?

FV reviews all reports of misconduct, and reserves the right to put any matter to the tribunal that is a breach of the GDT.

#### Am I expected to attend my Tribunal hearing?

FV encourages you to attend the hearing if charged, so that you can have your say about the incident. If you choose to not attend, the Tribunal may still hear the matter and determine a penalty against you. Any witnesses, and/or person(s) making statements or providing evidence during FV's investigations are required to attend the hearing in person. For Clubs that are charged, FV expects they will be represented by a member of the Club's committee, or other suitable person.

#### Where is the Tribunal hearing held?

Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), Level 5, 15 William St, Melbourne VIC 3000

FV will advise if at a different location.

#### If I can't make my hearing date, can I change it?

Tribunal adjournments may only be granted for extraordinary circumstances. You must lodge in writing the reasons for adjournment no later than Monday, 1:00pm (week of) prior to the tribunal hearing to FV.

#### What should I prepare for my tribunal hearing?

- Make sure you understand the charges levelled against you and the possible penalties that may apply.
- Read the GDT and specifically the penalties for each charge.
- Read the *Evidence/Case Materials* (misconduct report, Ref's report, etc) and make sure all relevant material that you want to show to the Tribunal has been submitted to FV at least 48 hours prior to your case.
- Advise any relevant witnesses to attend the tribunal hearing.

#### Evidence/Case Materials

Submissions from Match Officials and/or clubs during the initial investigation by FV will make up the Case Materials for each case. This can be inclusive of, but not limited to, documents, emails, photographs and videos. Witnesses who provide a statement must be available to attend the tribunal or their evidence may not be able to be used.

#### Will the tribunal hearing be recorded?

Tribunal hearings may be recorded at FV's discretion or at a party's request. Individuals & clubs are not permitted to record hearings. Transcription costs are borne by the requesting party.

### AT THE TRIBUNAL

#### What is expected of you?

- Arrive early (15 minutes) prior to the hearing time;
- Notify an FV representative of your arrival and sign the attendance record;
- You must take your charges seriously;
- You may bring a parent or friend to help you; and
- Be polite and respectful towards the tribunal members and other parties present.

Improper behaviour by any club associate at the Tribunal may result in further penalties imposed to the club and/or individual.

#### What happens at a Tribunal Hearing?

- When your hearing starts, the Chairperson of the Tribunal will outline the charges against you. You will be asked to plead either 'Guilty' or 'Not Guilty' to the charge(s).
- Evidence will then be heard. You will be allowed to ask questions of witnesses, & the Tribunal may ask questions too.
- After all the evidence is heard, you will be allowed to have a final say as to what you believe should happen with your case.

The Tribunal will then normally ask everyone to leave the room while it considers the matter. Parties will then be called back into the room and the Tribunal will give its decision.

#### What's the difference between pleading Guilty or Not Guilty?

Where a party pleads Guilty to the charges against them, the party accepts the charges and the hearing is mostly about what penalties should apply under the GDT.

Where a party pleads Not Guilty, the party does not accept the charges and the hearing needs to consider whether the misconduct occurred, and if so, then what penalties should apply.

Parties are sometimes given a discount in the penalty for pleading guilty, but it can also affect how you appeal if you need to appeal. You should seek advice from a parent, lawyer or someone at the club you trust in working out the best choice for you.

#### How long does a hearing take?

Depending on the complexity of the case; tribunal hearings can last between 20mins to 3 hours. 'Guilty' plea hearings are usually quicker than 'Not Guilty' cases. Please allow time for tribunal hearings to take longer duration than scheduled.

#### Legal Representation?

Most cases proceed without a lawyer; although players usually have a parent or senior club member present to help them. Having a lawyer is not required and will only be allowed for complex cases with prior notification to FV. FV recommends seeking legal advice when considering or submitting an appeal.

### AFTER YOUR HEARING

#### Where can I find Tribunal decisions?

All tribunal decisions are placed on the FV website, usually within 24 hours of the hearing.