

# BANKSTOWN

District Amateur Football Association



## BDAFA Safe and Respectful Football Environment Directive

Issued pursuant to the powers of the BDAFA Board under the BDAFA Regulations.

Effective Date: 22/06/2026

### PURPOSE

The Bankstown District Amateur Football Association (BDAFA) is committed to providing a safe, respectful and family-friendly environment for all participants, referees, volunteers, officials and spectators.

The BDAFA Board has identified an unacceptable increase in serious incidents involving spectators, supporters and other non-playing participants entering the field of play and becoming involved in altercations, intimidation, threats and acts of violence.

The involvement of people who are not participating in a match significantly increases the risk of serious injury and undermines the integrity, reputation and safe conduct of football within our Association.

Accordingly, BDAFA adopts a Zero Tolerance approach to violence, field invasions and the involvement of non-playing participants in any incident occurring before, during or after a match.

This Directive is issued under the authority of the BDAFA Regulations and applies to all BDAFA competitions, fixtures, finals series and Association sanctioned events.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Directive are to:

- a) Protect players, referees, officials, volunteers and spectators.
- b) Eliminate violence and anti-social behaviour from BDAFA competitions.
- c) Prevent spectators and non-playing participants from becoming involved in on-field incidents.
- d) Reinforce club accountability for the conduct of their members and supporters.
- e) Preserve the integrity and reputation of BDAFA competitions.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

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For the purpose of this Directive, a Non-Playing Participant includes any person associated with a Club or Team who is not actively participating in the match as a player, including but not limited to:

- Spectators;
- Supporters;
- Club officials;
- Coaches;
- Managers;
- Registered Team Officials (RTOs);
- Ground Marshals;
- Team Marshals;
- Suspended players;
- Injured players not participating in the match;
- Volunteers; and
- Any other person acting on behalf of, or associated with, a Club.

### **PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

No Non-Playing Participant may enter the field of play before, during or after a match where such entry:

- a) contributes to an altercation, confrontation or dispute;
- b) intimidates, threatens or abuses any player, referee, official or spectator;
- c) engages in physical contact with any person;
- d) escalates an incident or disorderly behaviour;
- e) attempts to retaliate against another person;
- f) encourages or incites violence; or
- g) otherwise compromises the safety, integrity and orderly conduct of a match.

For the avoidance of doubt, entering the field of play for the purpose of “assisting”, “supporting teammates”, “breaking up an incident” or “protecting a player” will not excuse or justify a breach of this Directive.

However, Ground Marshalls and RTOs for the match in progress can enter the pitch however must clearly demonstrate that their actions were contributing to de-escalating the incident. Should the Match Official deny or request the Ground Marshalls & RTOs to leave the Field of Play, they must do so immediately.

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## TEAM RESPONSIBILITY

Each Team is responsible for the conduct of all Non-Playing Participants associated with them.

Teams must ensure that all spectators, supporters, officials, coaches, managers and associated persons remain outside the field of play and comply with all BDAFA Regulations, policies and Board Directives.

## CLUB RESPONSIBILITY

Each Club is responsible for promoting, communicating, supervising and enforcing BDAFA's Code of Conduct, Regulations and Board Directives.

Clubs must take all reasonable steps to educate and control the behaviour of:

- Players;
- Coaches;
- Managers;
- Registered Team Officials;
- Ground Marshals;
- Team Marshals;
- Volunteers;
- Members;
- Supporters; and
- Any persons associated with the Club.

Clubs are expected to actively intervene to prevent incidents from escalating and to support referees, match officials and BDAFA representatives in maintaining a safe environment.

## MANDATORY SANCTIONS

Where BDAFA determines that a Non-Playing Participant associated with a Team entered the field of play and caused, contributed to or escalated an incident involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation or physical confrontation, the following sanctions shall apply:

- a) The Team will be immediately suspended from competition pending an expedited review by BDAFA.
- b) Upon confirmation of the facts by BDAFA, the Team will be removed from the competition for the remainder of the season.
- c) BDAFA may impose additional sanctions on the Club and individuals involved.

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## **ADDITIONAL CLUB SANCTIONS**

Where BDAFA determines that a Club has failed to take reasonable steps to prevent, control or address behaviour inconsistent with BDAFA's Code of Conduct, Regulations or this Directive, additional sanctions may be imposed.

Such sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- Exclusion of all teams from finals series participation;
- Deduction of competition points;
- Suspension or removal of teams from competitions;
- Suspension of Club officials;
- Monetary penalties;
- Restrictions on future competition participation;
- Mandatory behavioural improvement plans;
- Suspension of Club privileges; and
- Suspension or disaffiliation of the Club from BDAFA.

## **MATTERS BDAFA MAY CONSIDER**

In determining whether additional sanctions apply, BDAFA may consider:

- a) Whether the Club adequately communicated this Directive to its members.
- b) Whether Ground Marshals and Team Marshals performed their duties appropriately.
- c) Whether Club officials acted promptly to control the situation.
- d) Whether the Club has a history of similar incidents.
- e) The seriousness of the incident.
- f) The level of cooperation shown during any investigation.
- g) Whether the conduct brought BDAFA or the game of football into disrepute.
- h) Any other matter BDAFA considers relevant.

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## EXCEPTIONS

This Directive does not apply where a person enters the field of play solely to:

- a) Provide urgent medical assistance;
- b) Respond to a serious injury;
- c) Comply with a direction from the referee or a match official;
- d) Remove themselves or another person from an immediate threat to personal safety;  
or
- e) Carry out duties expressly authorised under the Laws of the Game or BDAFA Regulations.

## NO DEFENCE

It shall not be a defence that:

- The incident was initiated by another Team;
- The person was attempting to break up the incident;
- The person was acting in support of a player;
- The person was not an officially Registered Team Official (RTO); or
- The person believed their actions were justified.

## CLUB COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

Clubs must immediately communicate this Directive to:

- All players;
- Coaches;
- Managers;
- Registered Team Officials;
- Ground Marshals;
- Team Marshals;
- Volunteers;
- Members; and
- Supporters.

Clubs are responsible for ensuring all persons associated with their Club understand and comply with these requirements.

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## **BOARD AUTHORITY**

This Directive forms part of BDAFA's governance framework and will remain in force until amended or revoked by resolution of the BDAFA Board.

The Board reserves the right to impose any additional sanction permitted under the BDAFA Regulations where necessary to protect participants and preserve the integrity of the competition.

## **OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE**

The safety of participants, referees, volunteers and spectators is paramount.

BDAFA will adopt a Zero Tolerance approach to violence and will not tolerate behaviour that threatens the safe, respectful and family-oriented environment expected within our Association.

By Order of the Board

BANKSTOWN DISTRICT AMATEUR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION