

Recreation Rules and Discipline Committee

The Loudoun Soccer Rules and Discipline Committee (R&D) is the principal Loudoun Soccer body responsible for supervising the enforcement of all Loudoun Soccer Rules and Procedures. This includes those rules and procedures externally adopted (e.g., FIFA Laws of the Game) and those rules internally developed and described elsewhere in formal Loudoun Soccer documentation (e.g., the Loudoun Soccer Bylaws, the Loudoun Soccer Rules and Procedures document).

1. Scope

The Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee is responsible for reviewing, evaluating and deciding on whether any disciplinary action should be taken by Loudoun Soccer against any player, team official, team, league official or spectator which fails to abide by either the Loudoun Soccer Rules and Procedures or any rules and procedures externally adopted (e.g., FIFA Laws of the Game, Suburban Friendship League rules).

When a player, coach, parent or club official is alleged to have assaulted a referee or an assistant referee, the State Association has total jurisdiction. The R&D Chairman, having information about an alleged assault, will immediately notify the State Association authorities and give them all information compiled by Loudoun Soccer. Any player, coach, parent or club official alleged to have assaulted a referee or assistant referee is automatically suspended from all Loudoun Soccer activities pending resolution by the State Association.

2. Composition

The Rules and Discipline Committee shall consist of the Loudoun Soccer Vice President of Recreation (chairperson) and at least seven (7) other members, approved by the Loudoun Soccer Board annually. In accordance with the R&D Committee being a standing committee in the Bylaws, the R&D Committee members will be nominated by the Board to serve on the Committee during both the Spring and Fall seasons of a given year. The R&D Committee may consist of:

1. Representative(s) from the Referee Director (Referee Director, Referee Instructor, etc.)
2. Technical staff member(s) (Director of Coaching, Technical Director, etc.)
3. Volunteer coach(es)
4. Administrators (Regional Commissioner, AGC, etc.)
5. Vice President of Travel
6. At-large member(s) (travel coach, parent, etc.)

Any Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee member directly associated with a complaint being considered by the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee will be ineligible to participate in the proceedings relative to that complaint. If such ineligibility occurs, the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee Chairman will be responsible for selecting a suitable substitute, or substitutes, to review and rule on the particular complaint. A minimum of five (5) Committee members will constitute quorum for a R&D hearing.

3. Philosophical Approach

The Loudoun Soccer R&D process is to be used as sparingly as possible. Potential R&D Issues may be either game-related or non-game-related. The approach used to address each type of issue is discussed below.

1. Game-related R&D Issue

Typically, this will involve a Player or Coach protesting their being ejected from a specific game. The Player or Coach submitting the protest initiates the R&D Complaint. In addition, all oral or written comments on Referee Game Report(s) may be reviewed by the Referee Director and used to initiate an R&D complaint. In this instance, the individual Referee, in consultation with the Referee Director, initiates the R&D complaint. Game related issues must be sent to the Loudoun Soccer Board within five (5) days of the incident.

2. Non Game-related R&D Issues

These complaints can vary widely. They may be administrative in nature or involve "For the good of Loudoun Soccer" type of concerns. Administrative issues are initially assumed to be mistakes made either through oversight or because an individual felt they were acting in the best interest of the children. These concerns will be approached in a positive fashion. The particular Program Manager will work with the individual(s) involved to correct the problem and to work on suggested improvements. In the event the Program Manager cannot resolve the concern, then the Program Manager will submit the concern to the R&D Committee for resolution. Non-program specific issues will be addressed by the Vice President. The Vice President will also initiate the R&D process in cases where the Program Manager is the subject of the complaint. If the complaint is non-program related and the Vice President is the subject of the complaint, then the President shall initiate the R&D process. Non game-related issues must be sent to the Loudoun Soccer Board within a reasonable time of the occurrence(s).

In either case, once a concern has been identified, it is referred to the R&D Committee Chairman for action. No review by the Loudoun Soccer Board is performed at this time.

It is strongly hoped and expected that, with the possible exception of game ejections, almost all of these issues can be resolved without becoming Formal R&D Complaints.

4. Process and Outcomes

All issues placed before the R&D Committee must be submitted formally (i.e., letter or e-mail) to the Loudoun Soccer Board.

1. R&D Committee Timeliness Requirements

Within 7 days after receiving the complaint, the R&D Committee will make a preliminary assessment of the complaint and decide either:

1. The response to the complaint is clear, given published Loudoun Soccer policies and procedures (e.g., Bylaws, Loudoun Soccer Rules and Procedures, FIFA Laws of the Game, as modified by Loudoun Soccer), a hearing is not necessary. In this instance, no further investigation will occur, and the R&D Committee will quickly render and document their decision in the matter. In this instance, the 7-day timeline includes reaching a decision, documenting that decision, and transmitting that decision to all interested parties.
2. The response to the complaint is not clear, a hearing is necessary. In this instance, the R&D Committee will conduct a formal investigation into the matter. The R&D Committee Chairman shall inform all parties with regards to how the R&D issue will be addressed. This information includes:
 - The specific composition of the R&D Committee that will rule on the issue.
 - The information collection activities to be performed (e.g., requests for information in writing, a hearing) and when.
 - When the R&D Committee expects to render a decision.

The R&D Committee is expected to complete all actions pertaining to a specific R&D issue no later than 21 days after receiving a complaint. This includes rendering a decision and informing the parties involved and the Loudoun Soccer Board of that decision. Note: R&D issues should be resolved as soon as is practical. Members should be selected for the R&D Committee based, in part, on their availability. If the R&D Committee Chairman is unavailable, the Loudoun Soccer Board should select a substitute Chairman.

2. **Meetings**

The R&D Committee Chairman will manage the meeting schedule for addressing the issue. Meetings may be face-to-face, by telephone conference call, computer-based electronic collaboration, or by other means, as appropriate. All parties shall be notified when these meetings will occur.

3. **Deliberations**

Deliberations will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner. Information may be gathered by the Committee in writing or verbally. All parties will be given the opportunity to address the committee, if they desire. Committee deliberations, other than for information gathering purposes, shall be private (i.e., no non-committee members will be permitted to be present).

4. **Potential Actions**

All proposed actions of the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee shall require a simple majority vote in favor to approve that action. Proposed actions shall be consistent with the philosophical approach previously stated.

Actions That May be Taken against a Player, Team Official, Team, League Official, or Spectator are listed below.

1. The R&D Chairman may make a verbal warning. A record of such warning shall be made and may be referenced in any future actions against that party. A copy will be sent to the appropriate Team Representative, as applicable.
2. The R&D Chairman may send a written censure to the offending party. A copy of the censure shall be sent to the offending party's coach or Team Representative, as appropriate.
3. A player, team official, team, league official, or spectator may be suspended for a number of games specifically identified to that party. A suspended player may not participate in any game for which they are suspended. Suspended team officials may not appear at the game site or its vicinity for which they are suspended. In cases where team standings are maintained, failure to comply with a suspension will cause the game for which the suspension should have been served to be forfeited to the opposition by a score of 1-0.
4. The R&D Committee may ban a player, team official, team, league official, or spectator from either participation or attendance at any Loudoun Soccer activities for a specified period of time.
5. The R&D Committee may require an offending party attend a Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) workshop to help reinforce the expected behavior.

The R&D Committee Chairman shall keep appropriate records of all such actions and those records, along with the Laws and Rules of Loudoun Soccer may be the basis for future disciplinary action.

5. **Enforcement of Actions Taken**

The Loudoun Soccer Board, or its designated representative(s), will enforce any actions taken by the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee.

6. **Appeals**

An affected party, or parties, may appeal any decision rendered by the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee to the Loudoun Soccer Board. The appeal must be postmarked within 7 days of the receipt of the findings of the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee and sent registered mail to the Loudoun Soccer Office. The Loudoun Soccer Board shall vote on the validity of the protest; a majority vote supporting the protest shall over-turn the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee's decision. The Loudoun Soccer Board shall vote on the protest within 21 days of the receipt of the findings of the Loudoun Soccer R&D Committee.