

Hill Top Golf and Country Club

Code of Conduct

(Anti-discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy)

Policy Statement

Hill Top Golf and Country Club (Hill Top) is committed to provide an environment that is free from harassment and abuse for members and guests, at Hill Top and at other clubs, and which promotes respectful behaviour and values. This policy provides a Code of Conduct forming the basis of appropriate and ethical conduct with which all members must abide.

By effectively implementing the Policy we will attract and keep members to participate in golf and bowls and in other aspects of the club whatever the member's status, ability, social and personal circumstances in an environment that respects the worth, dignity and equality of opportunity of all people. Hill Top will be a place in which members, guests and visitors enjoy participating in club activities and can feel relaxed and at ease to make use of the Club's facilities. .

Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying is not only **unacceptable** it is **unlawful** pursuant to state legislation (Equal Opportunity Act 1995, Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001) and federal legislation (Sex Discrimination Act, 1984; Racial Discrimination Act 1975; Disability Discrimination Act 1992; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986) and various Occupational Health & Safety Acts.

In addition, the Club's Directors acting as the Board and Committee of Management and their management delegates and Club office bearers will ensure all complaints are treated confidentially, seriously and sympathetically. To this end, we have developed an internal complaint resolution process to assist our members when raising issues of concern. Relevant disciplinary action will be taken against anyone found to have breached this policy. No member will be penalized or disadvantaged as a result of raising concerns or complaints relating to discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Behaviour

Considerate behaviour of members to an acceptable standard, and toward one another and guests and while participating at other Clubs, is an important part of our club and applies equally in the playing of our sports and in the clubhouse. Members do not like to play sport or socialize with another member who breaks rules, cheats, abuses others or displays any other form of behaviour which is embarrassing or upsetting to others.

Members need to understand that their behavior, language and comments reflects not only on themselves but also on their team or partners and on our Club. Members need to ensure that they abide by the following guiding principles in relation to their behaviour in playing bowls or golf, in the clubhouse or other parts of the club and at other clubs:

- Play your sport according to the rules and club by-laws and observe correct etiquette,
- By not damaging or breaking club property
- Respect and comply with the decisions of Sub-committees which are established to organize and conduct our bowls, golf events and social events,
- Respect and comply with decisions of the Board for the overall management of the club,
- By not throwing or deliberately breaking or abusing playing equipment such as clubs, bowls and bags,
- Do not use profane or abusive language toward another player, club official, guest or visitor on the course or within the Clubhouse at Hill Top or when visiting other clubs,

- Do not verbally or physically threaten or racially vilify another player, official, guest or visitor at any venue.
- Refrain from making comments or “behind the back” remarks about another member or club official that if repeated can be construed as harassment.
- Do not discriminate against any member or group of members with language, innuendo or their rights as a member of Hill Top or of another club.

What is Discrimination?

Unlawful discrimination occurs when a person considers that they have been treated less favorably owing to an attribute when compared with a person not having that attribute.

Protected attributes in Victoria include:

Age, disability/impairment, industrial activity/inactivity, lawful sexual activity, gender identity, marital status, (including defacto), physical features, political belief or activity, pregnancy/breastfeeding, race, sex, religious belief or activity, status as a parent or carer, personal association with someone of the above attributes, irrelevant criminal conviction.

What is Harassment?

Harassment is an unwanted behavior and can take many forms. It may involve inappropriate actions, behavior, comments or physical contact that is objectionable or causes offence. Unlawful harassment may relate to any of the attributes protected in various equal opportunity legislation mentioned above.

It is important to note that it is not relevant at law as to whether or not the inappropriate behavior was intended. It is also important to understand that it is the person being subjected to the behavior who determines whether the behavior is welcome or unwelcome. In Victoria, co-members can be named sole respondents in cases of alleged sexual harassment.

Harassment may be seen to have occurred if that behavior makes the victim feel:

- offended and humiliated;
- intimidated or frightened; and/or
- uncomfortable at Hill Top or any other club at which Hill Top members are participating or visiting

Hill Top recognizes that comments and behavior which do not offend one person can offend another. The management/Board accepts that individuals may react differently and expects that members behave in a manner that will not offend or make others feel uncomfortable.

What is Bullying?

Bullying in a sporting club (Hill Top) is repeated, unreasonable behavior directed toward another member or group of members, office bearer or employee that creates a risk to the health and/or safety of those persons. It can include, but is not limited to, behaviors such as:

- acting in a manner to victimize a member, office bearer or employee;
- verbal abuse;
- exclusion practices;
- ridiculing a person or person’s opinion

Bullying is not an acceptable part of our Club culture because if it occurs it can cause harm to a person’s health and well being, both physical and psychological.

What is Victimization?

Victimization is seen to occur when a member or group of members maintain a constant form of behaviour, comments or exclusion toward another member, visitor or guest at Hill Top or while at another club, to the extent that the “victim” suffers a negative consequence as a result of those actions.

What can you do if you are subjected to discrimination, bullying or harassment?

If you consider you have suffered as a result of any of the above, raise your concerns with our manager, Directors or office bearers. These people should be in a position to give you the rationale behind any decision which may have caused you to feel disadvantaged or they can take your concern further.

Bullying and harassment is to be dealt with and should not be ignored (as ignoring the behavior could be taken as tacit consent). Anybody who experiences or witnesses harassment or bullying is encouraged to either:

- Inform the offender that the behavior is offensive and unacceptable and against Hill Top policy; or
- Seek assistance in having the behavior stopped. This may include making a report or a complaint

What will happen if you make a Complaint or Report?

Any complaint or reports of discrimination, harassment or bullying will be treated as quickly as practical, seriously and sympathetically. They will be investigated thoroughly, impartially and confidentially. The Board of Directors will review and deal with all complaints, whether written or verbal, which are received by the Manager or President within 21 days of an alleged offence. The Board will take steps to deal with the complaint within one month of the complaint being received. No member will be disadvantaged in anyway as a result of lodging a complaint.

What will happen to the person against whom you have made a Complaint?

Where complaints are substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will apply. Serious breaches of the policy may lead to termination of membership of Hill Top.

Complaint Procedure

If deemed appropriate an Investigation Committee will be established by the General Committee of Directors to investigate the complaint/allegation.

Verbal complaints will be dealt with but if very serious complaints are raised a written submission, setting out the details of the complaint, may be sought from the complainant.

The person(s) about whom the complaint has been made will be given every opportunity to present “their side of the story” as part of the investigation or at a General Committee meeting for which one week’s notice of meeting time and date will be given.

Notwithstanding any of the above or following procedures, if a meeting (normal or special) of the General Committee considers a complaint to be of a serious nature the person(s) about whom the complaint has been made may have their membership suspended until the investigation is completed or have their membership terminated immediately.

The General Committee or Investigation Committee will arrange to interview the complainant and all relevant witnesses. The complainant will be informed of the following:

- The date and the time of the interview;
- Their right to bring along a support person to the interview. The support person must not be a person who is also a witness in the investigation;
- The need for confidentiality.

The General Committee or Investigation Committee will also arrange to interview the other party. The other party will be informed of the following

- The number of complaints and the details of each complaint;
- The date and time of the interview;
- The right to bring along a support person to the interview. The support person must not be a person who is also a witness in the investigation;
- The need for confidentiality.

Witnesses will be cautioned regarding confidentiality requirements and victimization.

If an Investigation Committee is used it will present a written report to the President.

If the complaint is substantiated, the Board of Directors will determine the appropriate disciplinary action. Where the complaint is not substantiated, the complainant and the other party will be so informed.

If the investigation finds that the complaint was not made in good faith, appropriate disciplinary action may be imposed.

Mediation

Hill Top aims to sort out complaints with the minimum of fuss wherever possible. In many cases complaints can be sorted out by agreement between the people involved with no need for disciplinary action.

Hill Top or the people involved in the complaint may seek the assistance of a neutral mediator to resolve the complaint. Mediation may occur either before or after an investigation of a complaint.

Hill Top in consultation with the complainant would arrange for a mediator to mediate the complaint where mediation is the course of action agreed to by Hill Top and the complainant.

Our Commitment

We place great emphasis on attracting and rewarding the best people. We are committed to providing an environment which is safe and free of discrimination, harassment and bullying for all our members, visitors and guests so that Hill Top is a place where all can feel welcome and relaxed.

The policy has the full support and commitment of the Directors of the Club as Hill Top's elected body charged with the management and control of the Club.

Please help us to help you by giving your support in abiding by our code of behaviour and by avoiding practices, attitudes and comments which are not acceptable.