

NMIFA DISCIPLINARY CODE

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

EDITION 2024

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DEFINITIONS

In this NMIFA Disciplinary Code, capitalized terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise:

AFC	Asian Football Confederation.
Club	A group of which is a member of NMIFA that participates in a league or competition recognized by NMIFA.
Code	This NMIFA Disciplinary Code.
EAFF	East Asian Football Federation.
FIFA	The Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
NMIFA	The Northern Mariana Islands Football Association
Intermediary	A natural or legal person who, for a fee or free of charge, represents Players, Teams and/or Clubs in negotiations with a view to concluding an employment contract or represents Teams and/or Clubs in negotiations with a view to concluding a transfer agreement.
Match	<p>A football, futsal, or beach soccer match in its entirety (including a replayed and/or deferred match, extra time and penalty kicks).</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, a Match formally commences when the Stadium is officially opened to spectators and formally concludes when the Stadium is officially closed to spectators.</p>

Match Officials	<p>Individually or collectively, any individual appointed to one of the following roles in relation to any aspect of a Match:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Referees (separately defined below); (ii) Head of Delegation; (iii) General Coordinator; (iv) Match Commissioner; (v) Referee Assessor; (vi) Media Officer; (vii) Security Officer; (viii) Medical Officer; (ix) Technical Analyst; and (x) Any other official designation which the NMIFA deems to be required.
Official	<p>All office bearers and members of NMIFA committees, managers, coaches, trainers, Match Officials, medical officials, staff and any other person responsible for technical, medical and/or administrative matters in the NMIFA, leagues, Teams or Clubs, as well as other persons obliged to comply with the NMIFA Statutes (except Players and intermediaries).</p>
Player	<p>A football, futsal, or beach soccer player registered with a Team or Club.</p>
Post-match	<p>The time between the final whistle from the referee and the Teams' departure from the confines of the stadium.</p>
Pre-match	<p>The time between the Teams' arrival in the confines of the stadium and the whistle for kickoff from the referee.</p>
Referee	<p>Any individual appointed to officiate a Match in the role of referee, assistant referee, fourth official or timekeeper.</p>

Stadium	<p>Any stadium at which a Match is played. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the entire premises, the aerial space above such stadium premises; (ii) parking facilities; (iii) VIP and hospitality areas (including any hospitality village); (iv) the media tribune; (v) concessions areas; (vi) commercial display areas; (vii) buildings; (viii) the field of play; (ix) any broadcast compound or stadium media center; (x) any stands; and, (xi) Any areas beneath the stands.
Team	A non-member of NMIFA that participates in a league or competition recognized by NMIFA.

For the purposes of this Code, and provided the context so permits:

- (a) The singular shall include the plural and vice-versa;
- (b) Terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders;
- (c) Reference to competition shall include all NMIFA leagues;
- (d) References to the NMIFA shall include its successors and permitted assigns.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

1. Objectives

1.1. The principle of this Code is to ensure the objectives of the NMIFA as set out in Article 2 of the NMIFA

Statutes are respected.

1.2. This Code:

1.2.1. Describes infringements of the rules in NMIFA regulations;

1.2.2. Determines the sanctions incurred for any infringement; and

1.2.3. Regulates the organization and functions of the judicial bodies responsible for making decisions regarding any infringement and the procedure to be followed before said bodies.

2. Scope of application: jurisdiction

2.1. This Code applies to:

2.1.1. Every Match and competition organized by the NMIFA;

2.1.2. Every function, event and course organized by the NMIFA;

2.1.3. Every friendly Match, friendly International Match and international competition requiring authorization from NMIFA;

2.1.4. If a Match Official is harmed physically or otherwise;

2.1.5. If the statutory objectives of the NMIFA are breached, especially with regard to forgery, corruption and doping;

2.1.6. Any other football-related activity on Northern Mariana Islands not directly related to a Match;

- 2.1.7. Any activity of an individual bound by this Code outside of their official function in football which constitutes illegal, immoral, unethical behavior; and
- 2.1.8. Any breach of NMIFA regulations or Code of Conduct/Ethics that does not fall under the jurisdiction of any other body.

3. Scope of application: natural and legal persons

3.1. The following natural and legal persons are subject to and bound by this Code:

- 3.1.1. Direct and indirect members of the NMIFA;
- 3.1.2. Teams and their affiliates;
- 3.1.3. Clubs and their affiliates;
- 3.1.4. Officials;
- 3.1.5. Players;
- 3.1.6. Match officials;
- 3.1.7. Intermediaries;
- 3.1.8. Anyone elected and/or assigned by the NMIFA to exercise a function;
- 3.1.9. Anyone with authorization from the NMIFA (in particular, with regard to a Match, competition, function, course, or other event organized by the NMIFA);
- 3.1.10. Any candidate in a NMIFA election; and
- 3.1.11. Spectators

- 3.2. In the event that an individual bound by this Code ceases to serve in his function during proceedings, the judicial body shall remain competent to render a decision.
- 3.3. In the event an individual bound by this Code ceases to serve in his function, the NMIFA may conduct an investigation and present the case to the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee. The NMIFA Disciplinary Committee may suspend the proceedings or make a substantive decision. This rule only applies to infringements that take place after this Code is entered into force.

4. Scope of application: time

- 4.1. This Code applies to infringements that have occurred after it has come into force.
- 4.2. This Code applies to infringements that have occurred prior to it coming into force if this Code is equally favorable or more favorable to the perpetrator of the facts. In other cases, the version of the Code in force at the time of the infringement is applicable.
- 4.3. Rules governing procedure apply immediately upon the Code coming into force, regardless of the timing of the infringement.

5. Disciplinary decisions made by the Referee

- 5.1. Decisions taken by the Referee on the field of play are final and generally may not be reviewed by the judicial bodies.
- 5.2. In certain circumstances, the jurisdiction of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee may be enlivened (cf. Article 85).
- 5.3. In cases where the decision by the Referee involves an obvious error (such as mistaking the identity of the person penalized), the judicial bodies may only review the disciplinary consequences of that decision. In cases of mistaken

identity, disciplinary proceedings may, in accordance with this Code, be opened only against the person who was actually at fault.

5.4. A protest against a caution or a sending-off from the field of play after two cautions is admissible only if the Referee's error was to mistake the identity of the player.

5.5. The provisions of this Code relating to protests against Match results affected by a Referee's decision that was an obvious violation of a rule remain applicable.

CHAPTER ONE: DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Section 1: Types of disciplinary measures

6. Culpability

6.1. Unless otherwise specified, the principle of strict liability applies.

6.2. Therefore, infringements are punishable regardless of whether they have been committed intentionally, recklessly and/or negligently.

6.3. Exceptionally, a match may have to be played without spectators or on neutral ground, or a certain stadium may be banned purely for safety reasons, without an infringement having been committed.

7. Attempt and Involvement

7.1. Acts amounting to attempt are punishable.

7.2. Anyone who takes part in committing an infringement or induces someone to do so, either as instigator or accomplice, may be sanctioned.

7.3. The judicial body will take into account the degree of guilt of the party involved and may reduce the sanction for the actual infringement accordingly. Should a fine be imposed it shall not go below the general lower limit (cf. Article 12).

8. Sanction applicable to individuals

8.1. The following sanctions may be imposed on an individual:

8.1.1. Warning;

8.1.2. Reprimand;

8.1.3. Fine;

8.1.4. Caution;

8.1.5. Expulsion;

8.1.6. Suspension for a specific number of Matches or a specific period of time;

8.1.7. Ban from Team dressing room and/or Team bench;

8.1.8. Ban from entering a Stadium and/or any NMIFA facility;

8.1.9. Ban on taking part in any football-related activity;

8.1.10. Withdrawal of a title or award;

8.1.11. Confiscation;

8.1.12. Community service; and

8.1.13. Compliance training and prevention plan.

9. Sanctions applicable to Teams and Clubs

9.1. The following sanctions may be imposed on Teams and Clubs:

- 9.1.1. Warning;
- 9.1.2. Reprimand;
- 9.1.3. Fine;
- 9.1.4. Full or partial stadium closure;
- 9.1.5. Order to play a Match on neutral territory;
- 9.1.6. Ban on playing in a particular Stadium and/or any NMIFA facility;
- 9.1.7. Annulment of the result of a Match;
- 9.1.8. Disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition;
- 9.1.9. Defeat by forfeit;
- 9.1.10. Deduction of points (for a current or future competition);
- 9.1.11. Order that a match be replayed;
- 9.1.12. Withdrawal of a title or award;
- 9.1.13. Confiscation;
- 9.1.14. Withholding of revenues from a NMIFA competition;
- 9.1.15. Prohibition on registering new Players in NMIFA competitions;
- 9.1.16. Restriction on the number of Players that a Team or Club may register for participation in NMIFA competitions;
- 9.1.17. Withdrawal of a license to participate in NMIFA competition;

9.1.18. Community service; and

9.1.19. Compliance training and prevention plan.

10. Warning

10.1. A warning is a reminder of the substance of a disciplinary rule allied with the threat of a sanction in the event of a further infringement.

11. Reprimand

11.1. A reprimand is an official written pronouncement of disapproval sent to the perpetrator of an infringement.

12. Fine

12.1. A fine is issued in US Dollars (USD). Any fine shall be paid in USD.

12.2. Any fine issued shall be:

12.2.1. Not less than USD25.

12.2.2. Not more than USD10,000.

12.3. The judicial body that imposes the fine decides the terms and time limits for payment.

12.4. Teams and Clubs are not primarily jointly and severally liable for an affiliated individual's fine, unless otherwise decided by the judicial body.

12.5. Fines imposed on an individual stay with the individual, even when switching Teams or Clubs across any and all NMIFA competitions.

12.6. Teams and Clubs are still subject to a fine even when that Team or Club has ceased to exist or cease to be affiliated with NMIFA.

13. Caution

13.1. A caution (yellow card) is a warning from the Referee to an individual during a Match to sanction minor infringements as set out in Law 12 of the Laws of the Game (cf. Article 48).

13.2. Two (2) cautions received during the same Match incur an expulsion (indirect red card) and automatic suspension from the next Match in the same competition (cf. Article 14.5). The two (2) cautions that caused the expulsion are rescinded.

13.3. If an individual receives a caution in three (3) separate Matches of the same NMIFA competition, he is automatically suspended from the next Match in that competition unless the competition regulations provide otherwise. Such suspension is to be served before any other suspension.

13.3.1. The NMIFA Disciplinary Committee may exceptionally depart from or amend this rule before the start of a particular competition.

13.3.2. Any such decision is final and binding and not appealable.

13.4. If a Match was abandoned and is to be replayed in full, any caution issued during that Match shall be annulled. If a Match was abandoned, in particular for reasons of force majeure, and it recommences at the minute at which play was interrupted, any caution imposed before the Match was abandoned remains valid for the remainder of the Match. If the Match is not to be replayed, the cautions received by the Teams shall be upheld.

13.5. Cautions issued in a Match that is subsequently forfeited shall not be annulled.

- 13.6. If an individual is guilty of a sending-off offence (cf. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game) and receives a direct red card, any other caution he previously received in the same Match is upheld.

14. Expulsion

- 14.1. An expulsion is the order given by the Referee to someone to leave the field of play and its surroundings, including the Team bench and the technical area, during a Match. The individual who has been sent off may enter the stands unless he is serving a Stadium ban or NMIFA facility ban.
- 14.2. Expulsion takes the form of a red card for individuals. The red card is regarded as direct if it sanctions a sending-off offence (cf. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game); it is regarded as indirect if it is the result of an accumulation of two (2) cautions.
- 14.3. A player who has been sent off:
- 14.3.1. Shall stay in the Team dressing room, accompanied by a chaperone until the end of the Match. The Player may be allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity of the field of play, provided his integrity and security are safeguarded, and is no longer wearing their football equipment; and
 - 14.3.2. Is not entitled to attend the post-Match press conference or any other media activity held in the Stadium.
- 14.4. An official who has been sent off:
- 14.4.1. May be allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity of the field of play, provided his integrity and security are safeguarded;
 - 14.4.2. Shall not enter the dressing room, tunnel or technical area including the Team bench;
 - 14.4.3. Shall not communicate with or contact anyone involved in the Match by any means whatsoever; and

14.4.4. Is not entitled to attend the post-Match press conference or any other media activity held in the Stadium.

14.5. An expulsion automatically incurs suspension from the subsequent Match, even if imposed in a Match that is later abandoned and/or forfeited. The NMIFA Disciplinary Committee may extend the duration of the suspension.

15. Match Suspension

15.1. A Match suspension is a ban on taking part in a future Match and on attending it in the area immediately surrounding the field of play.

15.2. A Player who is suspended in accordance with Article 15.1:

15.2.1. Is automatically banned from the Team dressing room(s), tunnel and technical area including the Team bench;

15.2.2. May be allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity of the field of play, provided his security and integrity are safeguarded; and

15.2.3. Shall not attend the post-Match conference or any other media activity held in the Stadium.

15.3. An Official who is suspended in accordance with Article 15.1:

15.3.1. Is automatically banned from the Team dressing room(s), tunnel and technical area including the Team bench;

15.3.2. May be allowed to sit in the stands, but not in the immediate vicinity of the field of play, provided his security and integrity are safeguarded;

15.3.3. Shall not be permitted to communicate with or contact any person involved with the Match by any means whatsoever for the duration of the Match; and

15.3.4. Shall not attend the post-Match conference or any other media activity held in the Stadium except the pre-Match conference held on Match Day-1.

15.4. If the suspension is to be served in terms of Matches, only those Matches actually played count towards execution of the suspension. If a Match is abandoned, cancelled or forfeited, the suspension is only considered to have been served if the Team to which the suspended individual belongs is not responsible for the facts that led to the abandonment, cancellation or forfeit of the Match.

15.5. If a suspension is combined with a fine, the suspension may be prolonged until the fine has been paid in full.

15.6. A suspension is regarded as no longer pending if a Match is retroactively forfeited because a Player took part in a Match despite being ineligible (cf. Article 58). This also applies to the suspension imposed on the Player who took part in the Match despite being ineligible.

16. Ban from Team dressing room and/or Team bench

16.1. A ban from the Team dressing room deprives an individual of the right to enter a Team dressing room(s) and the area immediately surrounding the field of play.

16.2. A ban from the Team bench deprives an individual of the right to sit on the Team bench before, during, and after a Match.

16.3. These sanctions may be combined.

17. Stadium ban and NMIFA facility ban

17.1. A stadium ban prohibits an individual from entering a specific Stadium.

- 17.2. An individual may be banned from more than one (1) Stadium concurrently.
- 17.3. A NMIFA facility ban prohibits an individual from entering a specific NMIFA facility (entire property).
- 17.4. An individual may be banned from more than one (1) NMIFA facility concurrently.

18. Ban on taking part in any football-related activity

- 18.1. A ban on taking part in any football-related activity prohibits an individual from any involvement with

Northern Mariana Islands football.
- 18.2. This includes without limitation:
 - 18.2.1. Attending any Match in any NMIFA competition, event organized by NMIFA or event at any NMIFA facility.
 - 18.2.2. Participating in any Match in any NMIFA competition, event organized by NMIFA or event at any NMIFA facility.
 - 18.2.3. Attending or participating in any training activities connected to any Team or Club affiliated to NMIFA.
 - 18.2.4. Conducting any administrative duties connected to football, futsal, or beach soccer on behalf of a Team

or Club affiliated to NMIFA; and
 - 18.2.5. Attending any function or course related to football, futsal, or beach soccer, hosted by the NMIFA, Teams

or Clubs affiliated with NMIFA.

19. Full or partial Stadium closure

- 19.1. A Team or Club may be ordered to play a future Match with a full or partial Stadium closure.
 - 19.1.1. The judicial body shall order a partial Stadium closure in terms of percentage (e.g. 50% closure).

19.1.2. Any partial stadium closure shall not affect the allocation of tickets for away Teams or the provision of an away Team supporters' area.

19.1.3. In the case of a Team or Club, this sanctions shall apply to a future Match (or Matches) to be played in the NMIFA domestic competitions.

20. Playing a Match on neutral ground

20.1. A Team or Club may be ordered to play a Match on neutral ground.

20.2. This sanction shall apply to a future Match (or Matches) to be played in NMIFA competitions. Such Match (or Matches) shall not be played on the territory of which the Team or Club are affiliated, but may be played on the territory of which the opposing Team or Club is affiliated.

21. Ban on playing in a particular Stadium or NMIFA facility.

21.1. A ban on playing in a particular Stadium or NMIFA facility deprives a Team or Club of the right to play in a particular Stadium or NMIFA facility.

21.2. This sanction shall apply to a future Match (or Matches) to be played in a NMIFA competition.

22. Annulment of the result of the Match

22.1. An order that the result of a Match be annulled means that the result reached on the field of play is disregarded.

23. Disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition

- 23.1. A Team or Club may be disqualified from taking part in a competition in progress.
- 23.2. A Team or Club may be excluded from a future competition.
- 23.3. These sanctions may be combined.

24. Deduction of Points

- 24.1. A Team or Club may have points deducted in a competition in progress.
- 24.2. A Team or Club may have points deducted in a future competition.
- 24.3. These sanctions may be combined.

25. Forfeit

- 25.1. A Team sanctioned with a forfeit is considered to have lost the relevant Match 3-0 in football, 5-0 in futsal or 10-0 in beach soccer. If the goal difference at the end of the relevant Match is less favorable to the Team at fault, the result on the field of play is upheld.
- 25.2. A fine may be imposed subject to Article 59.

26. Order that a Match be replayed

- 26.1. A Match may be ordered to be replayed if it could not take place or could not be played in full due to the behavior for which a Team or Club is liable.

27. Withdrawal of a title or award

- 27.1. An order to return benefits received in particular sums of money and specific objects (e.g. trophies).

28. Confiscation

- 28.1. A confiscation order shall result in a specific object (e.g. monies, sports equipment) to be provided to the NMIFA.

29. Withholding of revenues

- 29.1. An order to withhold revenues is the forfeiture of any revenues owed as a result of participation and/or success in a competition.

30. Prohibition on registering new Players in NMIFA competition

- 30.1. A prohibition on registering new Players in NMIFA competition shall result in the relevant Team not being permitted to register any new, additional, or replacement Players within a current and/or future registration period identified in the relevant competition regulations.

- 30.1.1. Prohibition on registering new Players may be applied to the transfer window.

31. Restriction on the number of Players that a Team or Club may register for participation in NMIFA competitions

- 31.1. A restriction on the number of Players that a Team or Club may register for participation in NMIFA competitions shall result in the Team or Club being permitted to register a number of Players in a NMIFA competition which is less than the maximum identified in the relevant competition regulations.

32. Withdrawal of a license to participate in NMIFA competitions

- 32.1. An order for withdrawal of a license to participate in NMIFA competition is an annulment of a decision of a club licensing authority in NMIFA to award a license to a Club to participate in a future NMIFA competition.

33. Community Service

- 33.1. An individual, Team or Club may be ordered to undertake community service as directed by the judicial body.

34. Compliance Training and Prevention Plan

- 34.1. An individual, Team or Club may be ordered to undertake a compliance training on the required areas to educate themselves in any laws, regulations and policies as ordered by the judicial body.
- 34.2. An individual, may be ordered to undertake a prevention plan as directed by the judicial body.

Section 2: Common rules relating to sanctions

35. Suspension of implementation of sanctions

- 35.1. The judicial body may suspend or partially suspend the implementation of a sanction.
- 35.2. By suspending or partially suspending the implementation of a sanction, the judicial body subjects the party sanctioned to a probationary period of between six (6) months and two (2) years.
- 35.3. If a party benefiting from a suspended sanction commits another infringement during the probationary period, the suspension is automatically revoked and the sanction applied; it is added to the sanction pronounced for the new infringement.
- 35.4. In the case of anti-doping rule violations, this Article is not applicable.

36. Time sanctions: calculation of time limit

- 36.1. The duration of a time sanction can be interrupted by rest periods during or between seasons.

37. Centralization of sanctions

- 37.1. Records of cautions, expulsions and Match suspensions are stored on the server at NMIFA and uploaded to the website (and online platform if applicable).
 - 37.1.1. Following each Match, including final competitions, the Competitions Department shall upload the Match summary and statistics to the website (and online platform if applicable) and inform the relevant Team Manager or Club.

- 37.2. This communication serves only as a notice of confirmation: sanctions (cautions, expulsions, automatic Match suspensions) have an immediate effect on subsequent Matches even if the letter of confirmation reaches the relevant Team Manager or Club later than a Match in which a suspension is to be carried out.

Section 3: Carrying over and cancelling cautions and Match suspensions

38. Carrying over cautions

- 38.1. Cautions received during a competition are not carried over into another competition.
- 38.2. Cautions are carried over from one stage to the next in the same competition unless the competition regulations provide otherwise. The NMIFA Disciplinary Committee may exceptionally depart from this before the start of a particular competition.
- 38.3. Upon its own initiative or upon request, the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee may cancel cautions that have not resulted in an expulsion so as to restore balance among several Teams that have not played the same number of Matches during the first round of a competition, or in other exceptional circumstances.
- 38.3.1. This may only be undertaken once in any competition.
- 38.3.2. Any such decision is final and binding and not appealable.

39. Carrying over Match suspensions

- 39.1. As a general rule, every Match suspension is carried over from one stage to the next in the same competition
- 39.2. Unless otherwise decided by a judicial body, a match suspension pronounced in terms of matches in relation to a sending-off pronounced on an individual outside of a competition (separate match[es]) or not served during the competition for which they were intended (elimination or the last Match in the competition) is carried over as follows:
- 39.2.1. NMIFA competitions for representative Teams: to the representative Team's next Match in NMIFA competition in the same category of football;
- 39.2.2. NMIFA competitions subject to an age limit: to the representative Team's next Match in the same age group in NMIFA competition in the same category of football. Where the suspension cannot be served in the same age group, it shall be carried over to a higher age category in NMIFA competition in the same category of football;
- 39.2.3. Friendly Matches: Shall be carried over to the individual's next friendly Match; and
- 39.2.4. Non-official competitions for representative Teams: if the regulations of such competitions refer to the Code, to the representative Team's next Match in NMIFA competition in the same category of football.
- 39.3. Match suspensions may be carried over into other NMIFA competitions.
- 39.4. If a representative team is hosting a final competition and is not required to participate in qualifying matches and its next official Match in NMIFA competition is in that final competition, any Match

suspension pronounced in accordance with Article 39.2 shall be carried over to the representative Team's next friendly Match in the same category of football.

- 39.5. In no case may a Match suspension resulting from several cautions issued to an individual in different Matches of the same competition be carried over to another competition.
- 39.6. A Match suspension that has to be carried over to another competition must be served by the individual concerned, regardless of whether the status of that person has changed in the meantime – e.g. from Player to Team Official or vice versa.

Section 4: Determining the sanction

40. General Rules

- 40.1. The judicial body pronouncing the sanction determines the type and extent of the disciplinary measures to be imposed in accordance with the objective and subjective elements of the offence, taking account of both aggravating and mitigating circumstances.
- 40.2. Sanctions may be limited to a geographical area or to one (1) or more specific categories of Match or competition.
- 40.3. Disciplinary measures can be reduced or increased by the judicial body on the basis of the circumstances of the specific case.
- 40.4. For the avoidance of any doubt, the judicial body may, even where a minimum sanction is identified in the Code or relevant NMIFA regulations, choose to impose a sanction lower or higher than the minimum and/or of a different nature to the minimum after having considered all of the relevant circumstances in accordance with Article 40.3.

- 40.5. In addition to disciplinary measures, the judicial bodies may issue directives stipulating the manner in which a disciplinary measure must be carried out, including the date and conditions on which the disciplinary measure is to take effect.

41. Combined Sanctions

- 41.1. Sanctions imposed may be combined.

42. Recidivism

- 42.1. Recidivism is an aggravating circumstance. Unless otherwise specified, the judicial body may increase a sanction as it sees fit if an infringement has been repeated.
- 42.2. Subject to Articles 42.3 and 42.4, recidivism occurs if another offence of a similar nature is committed by the same defendant after notification of the previous decision within:
- 42.2.1. One (1) year of the previous offence if that offence was punished with a suspension of up to two (2) Matches; and
- 42.2.2. Three (3) years of the previous offence in all other cases.
- 42.3. There is no time limit for recidivism if the previous offence was related to Match-manipulation or corruption.
- 42.4. This Article is not applicable to repeated anti-doping rule violations which are governed by the FIFA Ant-Doping Regulations.

43. Concurrent infringements

- 43.1. Where more than one (1) infringement has been committed as a result of the same misconduct, the sanction shall be based on the most serious infringement, and increased as appropriate depending on the specific circumstances.

44. Limitation period for prosecution

- 44.1. Infringements committed during a Match cannot be prosecuted after a lapse of two (2) years.
- 44.2. The prosecution of anti-doping rule violations is subject to the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations.
- 44.3. Prosecution for Match-manipulation (cf. Article 70) or corruption (cf. Article 72) is not subject to a limitation period.
- 44.4. All other infringements cannot be prosecuted after a lapse of ten (10) years.

45. Commencement of limitation period

- 45.1. The limitation period runs as follows:
- 45.1.1. From the day on which the perpetrator committed the infringement;
- 45.1.2. If the infringement is recurrent, from the day on which the most recent infringement was committed;
- 45.1.3. If the infringement lasted a certain period, from the day on which it ended; and
- 45.1.4. The limitation period, when applicable, shall be interrupted where criminal proceedings are formally opened against a person bound by this Code during such proceedings.

46. Completion of limitation period

- 46.1. The limitation period is completed if the NMIFA commences proceedings before it has expired.

47. Limitation period for the enforcement of sanctions

- 47.1. The limitation period for the enforcement of sanctions is five (5) years.
- 47.2. The limitation period begins on the day on which the decision comes into force.

CHAPTER TWO: OFFENCES

Section 1: Disciplinary matters related to a Match

48. Minor infringements punishable by a caution

- 48.1. A Player is cautioned by the Referee during a Match if he commits any of the following offences (cf. Law 12 of the

Laws of the Game and Article 13 of the Code), without limitation:

48.1.1. Unsporting behavior;

48.1.2. Dissent by word or action;

48.1.3. Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game;

48.1.4. Delaying the restart of play;

48.1.5. Failure to retreat the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in;

48.1.6. Entering or re-entering the field of play without the Referee's permission;

- 48.1.7. Deliberately leaving the field of play without the Referee's permission;
- 48.1.8. Excessively using the 'review' (TV screen) signal.
- 48.2. An Official is cautioned by the Referee during a Match if he commits any of the following offences (cf. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game and Article 13 of the Code), without limitation:
 - 48.2.1. Clearly/persistently not respecting the confines of their Team's technical area;
 - 48.2.2. Delaying the restart of play by their Team;
 - 48.2.3. Deliberately entering the technical area of the opposing Team (non-confrontational);
 - 48.2.4. Dissent by word or action including:
 - 48.2.4.1. Throwing/kicking drink bottles or other objects;
 - 48.2.4.2. Gestures which show a clear lack of respect for the Match Official(s) e.g. sarcastic clapping;
 - 48.2.5. Excessively/persistently gesturing for a red or yellow card;
 - 48.2.6. Excessively showing the TV signal for a VAR review;
 - 48.2.7. Gesturing or acting in a provocative or inflammatory manner;
 - 48.2.8. Persistent unacceptable behavior (including repeated warning offences, cf. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game); and
 - 48.2.9. Showing a lack of respect for the game.
- 48.3. When an offence is committed and the offender cannot be identified, the senior Team coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction.

49. Serious infringements punishable by an expulsion

49.1. A Player is sent off by the Referee if he commits any of the following offences (cf. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game and Article 14 of the Code), without limitation:

49.1.1. Serious foul play;

49.1.2. Violent conduct;

49.1.3. Biting or spitting at an opponent or any other person;

49.1.4. Denying the opposing Team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area);

49.1.5. Denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the Player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick;

49.1.6. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures;

49.1.7. Receiving a second caution in the same Match; and

49.2. An official is sent off by the Referee if he commits any of the following offences (cf. Law 12 of the Laws of the Game and Article 14 of the Code), without limitation:

49.2.1. Denying the restart of play by the opposing Team e.g. holding onto the ball, kicking the ball away, obstructing the movement of a Player;

49.2.2. Deliberately leaving the technical area to:

49.2.2.1. Show dissent towards, or remonstrate with, a Match Official;

49.2.2.2. Act in a provocative or inflammatory manner;

49.2.3. Entering the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner;

- 49.2.4. Deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play;
- 49.2.5. Entering the field of play to:
 - 49.2.5.1. Confront a Match Official (including at half-time and full-time);
 - 49.2.5.2. Interfere with play, an opposing Player or Match Official;
- 49.2.6. Physical or aggressive behavior (including spitting or biting) towards an opposing Player, substitute, Official, Match Official, spectator or any other person (e.g. ball boy/girl, competition official etc.);
- 49.2.7. Receiving a second caution in the same Match;
- 49.2.8. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures;
- 49.2.9. Using unauthorized electronic or communication equipment and/or behaving in an inappropriate manner as the result of using electronic or communication equipment; and
- 49.2.10. Violent conduct (e.g. elbowing, punching, kicking).
- 49.3. Where an offence is committed and the offender cannot be identified, the senior Team coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction.

50. Sanction for serious infringements punishable by an expulsion

- 50.1. Including the automatic suspension incurred in accordance with Article 14.5, any recipient of a direct expulsion shall be issued a Match suspension as follows:
 - 50.1.1. One (1) Match for denying the opposing Team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity;
 - 50.1.2. At least one (1) match for deliberately receiving a yellow or red card, e.g. in order to be suspended for an upcoming Match and to ultimately have a clean record;

50.1.3. At least two (2) Matches for serious foul play;

50.1.4. At least one (1) Match for using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures or indulging in unsporting behavior towards an opponent or person other than a Match Official (subject to Articles 52, 56, 57, 61, 62, 63);

50.1.5. At least three (3) Matches or at least two (2) months for violent conduct towards an opponent or person other than a Match Official (e.g. elbowing, punching, kicking);

50.1.6. At least six (6) Matches or at least for (4) months for biting or spitting at an opponent or a person other than a Match Official;

50.1.7. One (1) Match for delaying the restart of play by the opposing Team;

50.1.8. At least one (1) Match for deliberately leaving the technical area to act in a provocative or inflammatory manner and/or entering the field of play to interfere with play or an opposing Player (cf. Articles 49.2.2.2 and 49.2.5.2);

50.1.9. At least one (1) Match for entering the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner;

50.1.10. At least one (1) Match for deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play; and

50.1.11. One (1) Match for using unauthorized electronic or communication equipment and/or behaving in an inappropriate manner as the result of using electronic or communication equipment.

50.2. A 63 of at least USD25 shall be imposed in all cases.

- 50.3. If a judicial body exercises its jurisdiction in accordance with Article 85.1.1 of the Code, the individual shall be considered to be a recipient of a direct expulsion and, subject to the circumstances, Article 50.1 and 50.2 may apply.

51. Sanction for serious infringements punishable by an expulsion undertaken against Match Officials

- 51.1. Including the automatic suspension incurred in accordance with Article 13.5, any recipient of a direct expulsion shall be issued a Match suspension as follows:

51.1.1. At least four (4) Matches or at least three (3) months for using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures towards a Match Official (subject to Articles 52, 56, 57, 61, 62, 63);

51.1.2. At least six (6) months for violent conduct (e.g. elbowing, punching, kicking) undertaken towards a Match Official;

51.1.3. At least twelve (12) months for biting or spitting at a Match Official;

51.1.4. At least two (2) Matches for acting with obvious intent to cause a Match Official to make an incorrect decision or supporting his error of judgement and thereby causing him to make an incorrect decision; and

51.1.5. At least one (1) Match for deliberately leaving the technical area to show dissent towards, or remonstrate with a Match Official and/or entering the field of play to confront a Match Official (including at half-time and full-time) or interfere with a Match Official (cf. Articles 49.2.2.1, 49.2.5.1 and 49.2.5.2).

- 51.2. A fine of at least USD50 shall be imposed in all cases.

- 51.3. If a body exercises its jurisdiction in accordance with Article 85.1.1 of the Code, the individual shall be considered to be a recipient of a direct expulsion and, subject to the circumstances, Article 51.1 and 51.2 may apply.

Section 2: Offences

52. Bringing the game into disrepute and violations of the principles of fair play

- 52.1. Teams or Clubs, as well as their players, officials and any other member and/or person carrying out a function on their behalf, must respect the Laws of the Game, as well as the FIFA statutes, NMIFA statutes and AFC statutes including its regulations, directives, guidelines, circulars and decisions, and comply with the principles of fair play, loyalty and integrity.
- 52.2. Any party whose conduct brings the game into disrepute has committed an offence and may be subject to disciplinary measures.

Penalty: Subject to the gravity of the offence.

- 52.3. Conduct that brings the game into disrepute includes without limitation:
- 52.3.1. Insulting someone in any way;
 - 52.3.2. Violating the principles of fair play;
 - 52.3.3. Engaging in unsporting behavior.
- 52.4. Where the individual cannot be identified, his affiliated Team or Club shall be held liable.

52.5. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

53. Brawl

53.1. Involvement in a brawl is an offence. Sanctions will be imposed on both the individual and their affiliated Team or Club.

53.1.1. Any individual who has tried merely to prevent a brawl, shield others or separate those involved in a brawl, shall not be deemed to be involved in a brawl.

Penalty: For an individual: Suspension of at least six (6) Matches or at least four (4) months;

For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD200.

53.2. Notwithstanding Article 53.1.1, any individual who deliberately enters the field of play during a brawl regardless of culpable conduct has committed an offence.

Penalty: Suspension of at least two (2) Matches.

53.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

54. Damage to property

54.1. Causing damage to property before, during, or after a Match is an offence.

54.2. Where property is damaged inside a Team dressing room or Team bench area, it is presumed that such damage was undertaken by an individual affiliated to the relevant Team assigned to that Team dressing room or Team bench area. The party may produce evidence to rebut the presumption, which shall be determined on the balance of probabilities.

54.3. Where the individual cannot be identified, his affiliated Team or Club shall be held liable.

Penalty: For an individual: Fine of at least USD100 plus cost of damage caused;

For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD200 plus cost of damage caused.

54.4. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

55. Team Misconduct

55.1. If any Team conducts itself improperly (for example, if individual disciplinary sanctions are imposed by the Referee on either five (5) or more Players or a combination of six (6) or more Players and Officials in case of football during a Match. For futsal and Beach, three (3) or more Players or a combination of four (4) or more Players and Officials during a Match. Disciplinary measures shall be taken against the Team or Club concerned.

Penalty: In Football competition: Fine of at least USD300;

In Futsal and Beach Soccer competitions: Fine of USD150.

55.2. Any Team where several individuals threatened or harass Match Officials or other persons during a Match has committed an offence.

Penalty: Football competition: Fine of at least USD400;

Futsal or Beach soccer competitions: Fine of USD200

55.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicialbody.

56. Inciting hatred and violence

56.1. Anyone who publicly incites others to hatred or violence has committed an offence.

Penalty: For a Player, Official or individual in a Team delegation: Match suspension of at least six

(6) months and fine of at least USD300;

For any other individual: Ban on all football-related activity for at least six (6) months and

fine of at least USD300;

For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD300 and any other sanctions as listed in the Code.

56.2. The offence is aggravated where the infringement is committed using the mass media, social media, or if it takes place on a Match day in or around a Stadium or NMIFA facility.

56.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicialbody.

57. Provoking the general public

57.1. Anyone who provokes the general public during a Match has committed an offence.

Penalty: For a Player, Official or individual in a team delegation: Suspension of at least two (2) Matches and a fine of at least USD150;

For any other individual: Ban on all football-related activity for at least sixty (60) days;

For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD300.

57.2. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

58. Ineligibility

58.1. If a Player is fielded in a Match despite being ineligible, an offence has been committed. Both the Player(s) and the Team or Club he is affiliated with shall be fined.

Penalty: Youth competition: Forfeit of the Match and fine of at least USD25;

Adult competition: Forfeit of the Match and fine of at least USD50.

58.2. If a Team fields more than one (1) Player who is ineligible in a Match, the fine shall be multiplied by the number of ineligible Players who participated in the relevant Match.

58.3. If the offence is discovered after the completion of a competition, the judicial body may additionally order that the Team be excluded from a future competition or the deduction of points from a future competition.

58.4. The offence is aggravated in cases of age-fraud.

Penalty: Forfeit of the Match (if applicable), fine of at least USD50, (if applicable) withdrawal of title or awards, and/or disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition.

59. Forfeit

59.1. A Team that forfeits a Match has committed an offence.

59.1.1. The Team at fault is considered to have lost the Match 3-0 in football, 5-0 in futsal or 10-0 in beach soccer. If the goal difference at the end of the Match is less favorable to the Team at fault, the result on the pitch is upheld.

59.1.2. The fine for a forfeit is dependent on when the forfeit was officially communicated to the league admin (Competitions Department). Times are related to the kick-off time of the match in question.

Penalty: More than 48 hours: Fine of at least USD50;

Within 48-24 hours: Fine of at least USD100;

Less than 24 hours: Fine of at least USD150.

59.2. The offence is aggravated in repeat offences.

Penalty: Initial fine as defined above, but an additional \$50 for each repeated offence (e.g.

Second offence: Initial fine, plus an additional USD50;

Third offence: Initial fine, plus additional USD100;

Each subsequent offence: The additional fine shall increase by USD50 from the previous, possible disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition.

59.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any other offence listed in the Code may be combined.

60. Abandonment

60.1. If a Team refuses to play a Match or to continue playing one which has begun, it has committed an offence.

Penalty: Forfeit of the match and fine of at least USD200.

60.2. The offence is aggravated in repeat offences.

Penalty: forfeit of the Match and fine of at least USD200 (plus an additional USD50 for each repeated

offence), possible disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition.

61. Discrimination

61.1. Anyone who offends the dignity of a person or group of persons through contemptuous, discriminatory or denigratory words or actions concerning race, skin color, gender, disability, language, age, physical appearance, religion, political opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation, or ethnic, national, or social origin has committed an offence.

Penalty: For an individual: Ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least one (1)

month and fine of at least USD250;

For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD300.

61.2. The offence is aggravated where several persons from the same Team or Club simultaneously commit the offence.

Penalty: For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD400, deduction of three (3) points for the current or future competition.

61.3. The offence is aggravated where supporters of a Team commit the offence.

Penalty: For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD250 and a deduction of three (3) points for the current or future competition, forfeiting of a Match or expulsion from a competition, or a combination of the above-mentioned sanctions may be imposed on the Team or Club concerned.

For a spectator: Stadium ban and/or facility ban of at least 2 years and a fine imposed on the Team or Club of at least USD100.

61.4. In any other type of aggravated offence, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

62. Threats

62.1. Anyone who intimidates a Match Official with serious threats has committed an offence.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD150 and a suspension of at least three (3) Matches.

- 62.2. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

63. Coercion

- 63.1. Anyone who uses violence or threats to pressure a Match Official into taking certain action or to hinder him in any other way from acting freely has committed an offence.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD250 and suspension of at least one (1) month.

- 63.2. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

64. Forgery and Falsification

- 64.1. Any who, in football-related activities:

64.1.1. Forges a document; or

64.1.2. Falsifies an authentic document; or

64.1.3. Uses a forged or falsified document, has committed an offence.

Penalty: For any individual: Fine of at least USD300 and suspension of at least three (3) Months.

- 64.2. A Team or Club may be held jointly liable for an offence committed by an individual. A Team or Club shall be held liable for the offence if the individual cannot be identified.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD300 and (in appropriate circumstances) disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition.

64.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

65. Abuse of Position

65.1. Persons bound by this Code shall not abuse their position in any way, especially to take advantage of their position for private aims or gains.

65.2. Violation of this article shall be sanctioned with an appropriate fine of at least USD200 as well as a ban on taking part in any football-related activity for a minimum of two (2) years. The sanction shall be increased accordingly where the person holds a high position in football, as well as in relation to the relevance and amount of the advantage received.

66. Doping

66.1. The commission of any Anti-Doping Rule Violation as pronounced within the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations in force at the relevant time is an offence.

Penalty: In accordance with the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations and NMIFA Disciplinary Code.

67. Failure to respect decisions

67.1. Anyone who fails to:

67.1.1. Pay a sum of money in full or part, even though instructed to do so by a body, a committee or an instance of NMIFA or a subsequent CAS appeal decision; or

67.1.2. Comply with a non-financial decision passed by a body, a committee or an instance of NMIFA or a subsequent CAS appeal decision; or

67.1.3. Respect the disciplinary decision of a Referee to expel him from a Match, has committed an offence.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD100.

67.2. The non-compliant party will be granted a final deadline by the judicial body in which to pay the amount or comply with the non-financial decision.

67.3. Anyone who fails to comply with a final deadline issued by a judicial body as set out in this Article has committed an aggravated offence.

Penalty: For an individual: Ban on football-related activity for at least three (3) months (first

offence), ban on football-related activity for at least six (6) months (repeated offences);

For a Team or Club: Deduction of points from a current or future competition (first offence),

disqualification from a current competition or expulsion from a future competition

(repeated offences).

- 67.4. The non-compliant party will be granted another final deadline by the body in which to pay the amount or comply with the non-financial decision. Failure to comply shall result in the offence pursuant to Article 67.3 being committed again.
- 67.5. Any appeal against a decision passed in accordance with this Article shall be directly lodged with CAS.

68. Organization of Matches

- 68.1. Any Team or Club that fails to fulfill any of its obligations relating to the organization of Matches has committed an offence.

68.1.1. Examples of this offence, without limitation, include: Hosting international friendlies with visiting teams, clubs or other sports organizations; without filling out the necessary paperwork appropriately.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD50.

- 68.2. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.
- 68.3. A Team or Club that hosts Matches is responsible for order and security both in and around the Stadium before, during, and after Matches. They are liable for incidents of any kind and may be subject to disciplinary measures and directives. In particular, it shall:
- 68.3.1. Assess the degree of risk posed by matches and notify the NMIFA bodies of those that are especially high-risk;

- 68.3.2. Comply with and implement existing safety rules (e.g. NMIFA regulations, national laws, international agreements) and take every safety precaution demanded by circumstances before, during and after the Match and if incidents occur;
- 68.3.3. Ensure the safety of Match Officials, Players and Officials of the visiting Team during their stay;
- 68.3.4. Keep local authorities informed and collaborate with them actively and effectively; and
- 68.3.5. Ensure that law and order is maintained in the Stadium and immediate surroundings and that Matches are organized properly.

69. Liability for spectator conduct

69.1. Improper conduct undertaken by spectators is an offence.

- 69.1.1. Improper conduct includes, without limitation, violence towards persons or objects, letting off incendiary devices, throwing missiles, the use of laser pointers or similar electronic devices, the use of insulting, religious and political messages or images in any form, uttering insulting words or sounds, causing a disturbance during national anthems, flying of drones and/or invading the field of play or other restricted areas.
- 69.1.2. The home Team or Club is liable for improper conduct among spectators, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight.
- 69.1.3. The visiting Team or Club is liable for improper conduct among its own group of spectators, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight. Supporters occupying the away sector of a Stadium are regarded as the visiting Team or Club supporters, unless proven to the contrary.

Penalty: Please refer to Appendix 1

- 69.2. For the avoidance of doubt, the liability described in Articles 69.1.2 and 69.1.3 includes Matches played on neutral territory.

70. Unlawfully influencing Match results

- 70.1. Anyone who directly or indirectly, by an act or an omission, unlawfully influences or manipulates the course, result or any other aspect of a Match and/or competition or conspires or attempts to do so by any means has committed an offence.

70.1.1. The requesting or support of any such influence or manipulation, whether for one's own gain or for the gain of others, shall fall within the scope of Article 70.1.

70.1.2. There is no influence or manipulation if the individual intends to obtain or secure an advantage exclusively within the context of a Match.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD300; and a ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least five (5) years.

- 70.2. In the case of an aggravated offence, the ban on taking part in any football-related activity shall be a life ban.
- 70.3. The Team or Club to whom the individual is affiliated may be also held jointly and severally liable for any offence committed pursuant to Article 70.1.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD500, and/or disqualification from a current competition or exclusion from a future competition, and (where applicable) withdrawal of a title or award.

70.4. The provision to anyone of special knowledge or otherwise not publicly available information that may impact on the integrity of any football Match or competition, whether for one's own gain or for the gain of others, is an offence.

70.4.1. The requesting or support of any such provision, whether for one's own gain or for the gain of others, shall fall within the scope of Article 70.4.

Penalty: For a Player: Fine of at least USD300 and a suspension of at least two (2) Matches;

For any other individual: Fine of at least USD300 and a suspension of at least one (1)

Match, or a ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least one (1) Month.

70.5. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

70.6. Association in a professional or sports-related capacity with an individual who has violated Article 70.1 or found in a criminal, disciplinary, or professional proceeding to have engaged in conduct which would have constituted a violation of Article 70.1 is an offence.

70.6.1. The disqualifying status of such individual shall be whichever is longer of:

70.6.1.1. The sanction issued due to a violation of Article 70.1; or

70.6.1.2. The criminal, disciplinary, or professional sanction imposed; or

70.6.1.3. Five (5) years from the date of the criminal, disciplinary, or professional sanctions imposed.

70.6.2. The association with a front or intermediary of an individual described in Article 70.6 of this Code shall be considered to be an association with that individual for the purposes of Article 70.6.

70.6.3. Anybody charged with an offence pursuant to Article 70.6 shall bear the burden of proving that their association with any individual described in Article 70.6 is not in a professional or sports-related capacity.

Penalty: For an individual: Ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least two (2) years;

For a Team or Club: Fine of at least USD500 and disqualification from a competition in progress and/or exclusion from a future competition.

- 70.7. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.
- 70.8. Everyone bound by this Code who fails to cooperate fully with the NMIFA at all times in its efforts to combat such behavior and report to the secretariat of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee immediately any approach in connection with activities and/or information directly or indirectly related to the possible manipulation of a football Match or competition incompatible with Article 70 of this Code has committed an offence.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD300; and/or ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least two (2) years.

71. Obligations of Teams and Clubs

- 71.1. Teams and Clubs shall:

71.1.1. Actively vet the age of Players shown in their NMIFA Profile which are produced in competitions that are subject to age limits;

71.1.2. Ensure that no-one is involved in their management who is under prosecution for action unworthy of such a position (e.g. doping, corruption, forgery) or who has been convicted of a criminal offence in the past five (5) years; and

71.1.3. Bear the responsibility of monitoring the cautions and/or suspensions received by its Players and Officials and to ensure that all Players and Officials registered and or fielded during a competition are eligible to play.

71.2. Failure to adhere to any of these obligations is an offence. The judicial body may order any of the sanctions as set out in this Code as it sees fit in the circumstances.

72. Corruption

72.1. Anyone who offers, promises or grants an unjustified advantage to a body or judicial body of the NMIFA, a Match Official, a Player or an Official on behalf of himself or a third party in an attempt to incite a violation of NMIFA regulations or obtain any other improper advantage has committed an offence.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD300; and a ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least three (3) years and confiscation of the assets involved in committing the infringement.

72.2. Anyone who solicits or accepts an unjustified advantage from an individual seeking to incite a violation of NMIFA regulations or obtain any other improper advantage, regardless of whether that advantage materializes, has committed an offence.

Penalty: Fine of at least USD300 and a ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least three (3) years, and confiscation of the assets involved in committing the infringement.

72.3. The instruction of an intermediary or related party to offer, promise, grant, solicit, or accept an unjustified advantage shall fall within the scope of Article 72.1 or Article 72.2.

72.4. For either offence, where the offence is aggravated, the ban on taking part in any football-related activity shall be a life ban.

72.5. For either offence, in the case of a repeated offence, the ban on taking part in any football-related activity shall be a life ban.

73. Betting

73.1. Making any bets in relation to any Match or competition is an offence.

73.1.1. The requesting or support of any such betting, whether for one's own gain or for the gain of others, shall fall within the scope of Article 73.1.

Penalty: For a Player: Fine of at least USD100 and/or suspension of at least one (1) Match;

For any other individual: Fine of at least USD100 and suspension of at least one (1) Match, or ban from taking part in any football-related activity for at least one (1) month.

73.2. The provision to anyone of special knowledge or otherwise not publicly available information that is relevant to betting on any Match or competition, whether for one's own gain or for the gain of others, is an offence.

73.2.1. The requesting or support of any such provision, whether for one's own gain or for the gain of others, shall fall within the scope of Article 73.2.

Penalty: For a Player: Fine of at least USD100 and/or suspension of at least one (1) Match;

For any other individual: Fine of at least USD100 and suspension of at least one (1) Match,

or ban from taking part in any football-related activity for at least one (1) month.

73.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

74. Integrity of Conduct

74.1. A party must use due care and diligence in fulfilling their duties.

74.1.1. Persons bound by this Code shall not abuse their position in any way, especially to take advantage of their position for private aims or gains.

74.2. A party must act with the highest degree of integrity, and particularly when making decisions, they must act with impartiality, objectivity, independence, and professionalism.

74.3. A party must refrain from any act involving fraud or corruption.

74.4. A party must not misappropriate or misuse funds of FIFA, AFC, NMIFA, Clubs, Teams, NMIFA leagues, or any other funds aimed at football, whether directly or indirectly through, or in conjunction with, third parties.

74.5. A party must not act in a manner likely to tarnish the reputation of Northern Mariana Islands Football.

74.6. A party or its representative(s) must not, directly or indirectly, solicit, accept or offer any form of remuneration or commission, nor any concealed benefit or service of any nature, when negotiating deals of any kind when performing their duties.

74.7. A party may only give or receive tokens of consideration or friendship of nominal value, in accordance with prevailing local customs.

74.7.1. Such tokens may not lead to the impartiality and integrity of the party or the NMIFA being called into question.

74.7.2. Any other form of token, object or benefit shall constitute a gift which shall not be accepted. Receipt of any such token, object, or benefit shall be immediately reported to the NMIFA.

74.7.3. For the avoidance of doubt, the giving and receiving of cash is not permitted.

74.7.4. For hospitality shown to a party, as well as those accompanying them, a sense of measure must be respected.

74.8. A party must avoid any situation that could lead to a conflict of interest.

74.8.1. When performing an activity for the NMIFA or before being elected or appointed, a party bound by this Code shall disclose any personal interests that could be linked with their prospective activities.

74.8.2. Conflicts of interest arise if the party bound by this Code has, or appear to have, private or personal interests that could detract from their ability to perform their duties with integrity in an independent and purposeful manner. Private or personal interests include gaining any possible advantage for other parties bound by this Code, relatives, friends, and acquaintances.

74.8.3. A party bound by this Code shall not perform their duties in cases with an existing or potential conflict of interest. Such conflicts shall be immediately disclosed to the NMIFA.

74.9. A party must respect the physical and mental integrity of others and must refrain from all forms of verbal, physical and mental abuse.

74.9.1. Harassment of any nature (including sexual harassment) is forbidden.

74.9.2. Harassment may be verbal, mental and/or physical in nature.

74.9.3. Harassment can take many forms, and includes systematic, hostile and repealed acts perpetrated for a considerable duration, which are intended to isolate or ostracize a person and affect the dignity of the person.

74.9.4. Sexual harassment can involve unwelcome sexual advances that are not solicited or invited.

74.9.5. Any assessment of harassment is based on whether a reasonable person would consider the relevant conduct to be undesirable and/or offensive (as the case may be).

74.9.6. Threats, the promise of advantages and coercion are particularly prohibited.

74.9.7. The harassment of minors shall be considered an aggravating factor.

74.10. Failure to adhere to any of these obligations is an offence.

Penalty: For physical or mental abuse: Fine of at least USD100 and ban on taking part in any football-related activity for at least two (2) years.

For sexual exploitation or abuse, or in other serious cases: Fine of at least USD250 and a

ban on taking part in any football-related activity may be pronounced for a minimum of ten (10) years.

Section 3: Rules of Conduct

75. Good Governance and Resources

75.1. A party must refrain from utilizing football resources for non-football and/or inappropriate purposes.

75.1.1. Football resources includes without limitation development monies or prize monies provided by the NMIFA to a Team or Club.

75.2. A party must ensure, where the NMIFA provides financial support to a Team or Club and where appropriate in accordance with their official role, that the use of these resources is clearly demonstrated in annual financial accounts.

75.2.1. The NMIFA may request and subject any such accounts to an independent audit by an expert of its choice.

75.3. A party must ensure that the promotion of their candidature for office in any Northern Mariana Islands Football election shall not denigrate the character of any other candidate.

75.3.1. NMIFA sponsors and NMIFA marketing partners are not permitted to support or promote any candidature for office. The relevant candidate shall be held liable for any support or promotion of their candidature for office by such third parties.

75.4. Failure to adhere to any of these obligations is an offence. The judicial body may order any other sanctions as set out in this Code as it sees fit in the circumstances.

76. Duty of neutrality, loyalty and confidentiality

76.1. A party must ensure that in dealings with government institutions, national and international organizations, associations and groupings, they remain politically neutral.

76.2. Everyone bound by this Code has a fiduciary duty to the NMIFA.

76.3. A party must ensure that information of a confidential nature divulged to them while performing their duties shall be treated as confidential or secret if such information is given with the understanding or communication of confidentiality.

76.4. Failure to adhere to any of these obligations is an offence. The judicial body may order any of the sanctions as set out in this Code as it sees fit in the circumstances.

77. Duty to report any infringement

77.1. Without prejudice to Article 70.8, everyone bound by this Code has a duty to report to the NMIFA, without undue delay and unprompted, any conduct of a third-party incompatible with this Code or any other NMIFA regulation.

77.2. The failure to comply with the duty to report conduct incompatible with this Code or any other NMIFA regulation is an offence.

Penalty: Subject to the gravity of the incompatible conduct that was not reported.

77.3. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.

78. Collaboration

78.1. Everyone subject to this Code is obliged to collaborate to establish facts if requested by the secretariat. In particular, they shall comply with requests for information.

78.2. The chairperson of the judicial body, upon the application of the secretariat, may impose a fine of up to USD500 or a ban on football-related activity of up to two (2) months, on anyone who is dilatory in responding to a request for collaboration.

78.2.1. The chairperson may hear any such application ex parte.

78.3. If the parties fail to collaborate, especially if they ignore the stipulated time limits, the judicial bodies will reach a decision on the case using the file in their possession.

CHAPTER THREE: ORGANIZATION

Section 1: Jurisdiction

79. General Rule

79.1. The scope of the jurisdiction of the NMIFA is set out in Article 2 of this Code. The judicial bodies shall be competent to investigate, prosecute and sanction conduct within the scope of application of this Code.

79.2. With regards to Matches and competitions not organized by the NMIFA (cf. Article 2), the relevant sports organization, Team or Club is responsible for enforcing sanctions against infringements committed in their area of jurisdiction.

79.2.1. The NMIFA may investigate, prosecute and sanction serious infringements within the scope of application of this Code that fall under the jurisdiction of Teams, Clubs or other sports organizations if deemed appropriate in a specific case and if the relevant Team, Club or other sports organization fails to prosecute serious infringements within three (3) months from the infringement becoming known to the NMIFA.

79.3. Teams, Clubs and other sports organizations shall notify the NMIFA of any serious infringements of the statutory objectives of the NMIFA that occur within their area of jurisdiction.

80. Jurisdiction of FIFA and AFC

80.1. FIFA shall have jurisdiction on disciplinary matters related to matches and competitions organized by it, to friendly matches and competitions between representative Teams or Clubs belonging to different confederations or to matches involving invitational Teams composed of players registered with Teams or Clubs belonging to associations of different confederations.

80.2. Confederations shall have jurisdiction on disciplinary matters related to friendly matches and competitions between representative Teams or Clubs belonging to the same confederation, provided that the competition is not organized by FIFA.

81. Cooperation with FIFA and AFC

81.1. All NMIFA Members have a duty to cooperate with FIFA and AFC, by sharing documents and providing information solicited in the scope of the respective disciplinary proceedings. If a NMIFA member fails to cooperate in this way, it may lead to sanctions as provided under this Code.

82. Judicial Bodies

82.1. The judicial bodies of the NMIFA (cf. Article 57 of the NMIFA Statutes) are the:

82.1.1. NMIFA Disciplinary Committee; and

82.1.2. NMIFA Appeals Committee.

83. Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)

83.1. Certain decisions passed by the NMIFA Appeals Committee may be appealed before the Court of Arbitration for

Sport if such an appeal is in accordance with the relevant Articles of the NMIFA Statutes and this Code.

Section 2: NMIFA Disciplinary Committee

84. General Jurisdiction

84.1. The NMIFA Disciplinary Committee is authorized to sanction any breach of NMIFA regulations which does not

come under the jurisdiction of another body.

85. Specific Jurisdiction

85.1. The NMIFA Disciplinary Committee is responsible for:

85.1.1. Sanctioning serious infringements which have escaped the Match Officials' attention;

85.1.2. Rectifying obvious errors in the Referee's disciplinary decisions;

85.1.3. Extending the duration of a Match suspension incurred automatically by a sending-off (cf.

Article 14.5); and

85.1.4. Pronouncing additional sanctions, such as a fine.

86. Jurisdiction of the chairperson or member ruling alone

86.1. The chairperson of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee or a member designated by the chairperson, may make the following decisions alone.

86.1.1. Suspend a person for up to five (5) Matches or up to two (2) months.

86.1.2. Pronounce a fine of up to USD300;

86.1.3. Settle disputes arising from objections to members of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee (cf.

Article 94);

86.1.4. Pronounce, alter and annul provisional measures (cf. Article 136);

86.1.5. In urgent cases on request, refer a case directly to the NMIFA Appeals Committee for its decision;

86.1.6. Rule on any protest received pursuant to any competition regulations;

86.1.7. Cases arising under Article 38; and

86.1.8. Cases arising under Article 78.

Section 3: NMIFA Appeals Committee

87. Jurisdiction

87.1. The NMIFA Appeals Committee is responsible for deciding appeals against any decision of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee that NMIFA regulations do not declare as final or referable to another body.

88. Jurisdiction of the chairperson or member ruling alone

88.1. The chairperson of the NMIFA Appeals Committee or a member designated by the chairperson may make the following decisions alone.

88.1.1. Decide on appeals against decisions passed by the chairperson or member of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee acting alone so long as such appeals are admissible (cf. Articles 86 and 128);

88.1.2. Decide on appeals against provisional measure decisions passed by the chairperson or member of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee acting alone (cf. Articles 86 and 136);

88.1.3. Decide on appeals in urgent cases or protest cases;

88.1.4. Resolve disputes arising from objections to members of the NMIFA Appeals Committee (cf. Article 94); and

88.1.5. Pronounce, alter and annul provisional measures (cf. Article 136).

Section 4: Common rules for the judicial bodies

89. Composition

89.1. The NMIFA Congress elects the chairperson, deputy chairperson, and one (1) member of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee for a period of four (4) years per Article 58 of the NMIFA Statutes.

- 89.2. The NMIFA Congress elects the chairperson, deputy chairperson, and one (1) member of the NMIFA Appeals Committee for a period of four (4) years per Article 59 of the NMIFA Statutes.
- 89.3. The chairperson of each judicial body shall be qualified to practice law. It is recommended that the deputy chairperson of each judicial body also be qualified to practice law. The members of each judicial body shall have experience in law or in football (as a coach, player, referee, or other substantial involvement in football).

90. Meetings

- 90.1. At the behest of the chairperson, the secretariat shall call the number of members deemed necessary to each meeting.
- 90.2. Subject to Article 86, meetings are deemed valid if at least two (2) members are present.
- 90.3. The chairperson, the deputy chairperson or, in their absence the longest-serving member, shall chair each meeting and pass the decisions that this Code empowers the chairperson to take.

91. Secretariat

- 91.1. The NMIFA General Secretariat provides the judicial bodies with a secretariat and the necessary support, infrastructure and staff.
- 91.2. The NMIFA General Secretary appoints the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries who shall be legally trained.
- 91.3. The secretariat takes charge of the administrative work and writes the minutes and decisions of the meetings.
- 91.4. The secretariat manages the case files. The decisions passed and the relevant files shall be kept for at least ten (10) years.

92. Independence

- 92.1. The chairperson, deputy chairperson and other members of the judicial bodies shall fulfill the independence criteria as defined in the NMIFA Statutes.
- 92.2. The judicial bodies pass their decisions entirely independently; in particular, they shall not receive instructions from any other body.
- 92.3. A member of another NMIFA body may not stay in the meeting room during the judicial bodies' deliberations unless they have explicitly summoned him to attend.

93. Incompatibility of office

- 93.1. The members of the judicial bodies shall not belong either to the NMIFA Executive Committee or any NMIFA Standing Committee.

94. Withdrawal

- 94.1. Members of the judicial bodies must recuse themselves from matters where there are serious grounds for questioning their impartiality.
- 94.2. This applies, without limitation, in the following cases:
 - 94.2.1. If the member has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter;
 - 94.2.2. If the member is associated with any of the parties;
 - 94.2.3. If the member has already dealt with the case under different circumstances.

- 94.3. Members who decline to participate in a meeting on any of the above grounds shall notify the chairperson immediately.
- 94.4. Parties may raise an objection to any member they believe to be biased.
- 94.5. The chairperson shall decide on any claim of bias. If an objection is raised concerning the chairperson, the deputy chairperson or, in his absence, the longest-serving member present, shall decide on such claim. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.
- 94.6. Proceedings that have involved someone whom the chairperson has ordered not to participate will be considered null and void.

95. Confidentiality

- 95.1. The members of the judicial bodies shall ensure that everything disclosed to them during the course of their duty remains confidential (including the facts of cases, the contents of any deliberations and all decisions taken).
- 95.2. Only the contents of those decisions already notified to the addressees may be made public. This includes, without limitation, publishing such decisions online. Where appropriate, such decisions shall be redacted.
- 95.3. Any person who is required to participate in or is subject to a disciplinary investigation or disciplinary proceedings must keep such information confidential at all times, unless the chairperson of the judicial body explicitly stipulates otherwise in writing. Any breach of such duty may be sanctioned.
- 95.4. In the event of a breach of this Article by a member of a judicial body, the relevant member shall be suspended from the relevant judicial body until the next NMIFA Congress.

96. Exemption from liability

- 96.1. Neither the members of the judicial bodies nor the secretariat may be held liable for any action or omission relating to any disciplinary procedure conducted pursuant to this Code.

97. Parties

- 97.1. Only the accused are deemed to be parties.

CHAPTER FOUR: PROCEDURE

Section 1: Time limits

98. Calculation of time limits

- 98.1. Time limits to which a party who has directly received or been forwarded a document shall adhere commence the day after receipt of the relevant document.
- 98.2. If the last day of the time limit coincides with a public holiday in the place of domicile of the party required to comply, the time limit will expire on the next day that is not a public holiday.
- 98.3. In urgent cases, the chairperson of the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee or the NMIFA Appeals Committee (as appropriate) may shorten any deadlines under this Code.
- 98.4. If a time limit is not observed, the defaulter loses the procedural right in question.

99. Compliance with time limits

- 99.1. Compliance occurs if the action required has been carried out before expiry of the time limit.
- 99.2. If the action required is the submission of a document, such document must be submitted to the relevant body no later than midnight on the last day of the time limit.
- 99.3. Parties shall submit documents by electronic mail (and, at their discretion, also by courier).
- 99.4. In the case of appeals, the appeal fee (cf. Article 131) is considered to be paid in time if the payment is irreversibly made to the nominated NMIFA account by midnight on the last day of the time limit.

100. Pause of time limits

- 100.1. Time limits are paused:
 - 100.1.1. During the period two (2) days before the NMIFA Congress up to two (2) days after;
 - 100.1.2. During the period two (2) days before the first Match up to two (2) days after the final Match of any EAFF, AFC or FIFA competition on the Northern Mariana Islands. The only exception shall be for facts arising during the Final competition and facts which have occurred before but which may have repercussions on the Final competition.
 - 100.1.3. During the period when NMIFA Main Office is officially closed. The exact dates of the closure will be announced to the Teams and Clubs via circular.
- 100.2. Special provisions may apply in certain circumstances.

101. Extension of time limits

- 101.1. Time limits that have been set by the secretariat or the chairperson may be extended, upon request. The time limits fixed in this Code shall not be extended.
- 101.2. Any requests made under Article 101.1 must be made before expiry of the relevant time limit.
- 101.3. A time limit shall not be extended more than twice and, the second time, only in exceptional circumstances.
- 101.4. Any decision to extend or not extend a time limit is final and binding and not appealable.
- 101.5. If the chairperson refuses to extend the time limit, the applicant will be granted two (2) extra days. In emergencies, the chairperson may announce their negative decision to the applicant orally.

Section 2: Right to be heard

102. Right to be heard

- 102.1. A party shall be given the opportunity to be heard before any decision is passed.
 - 102.1.1. A party may, without limitation:
 - 102.1.2. Refer to the file;
 - 102.1.3. Present their argument in fact and in law;
 - 102.1.4. Request production of proof;
 - 102.1.5. Be involved in the production or proof; and

102.1.6. Obtain a reasoned decision.

102.2. Special provisions may apply in certain circumstances.

103. Restrictions

103.1. The right to be heard may be restricted in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances shall be determined by the chairperson.

103.2. Special provisions may apply in certain circumstances.

Section 3: Evidence

104. Types of evidence

104.1. Any type of evidence may be produced.

104.2. The following categories of evidence, without limitation, are inadmissible:

104.2.1. Evidence that violates human dignity; and

104.2.2. Evidence in a language other than English that is not accompanied by a certified translation.

104.3. The following categories of evidence, without limitation, are admissible:

104.3.1. Reports from Match Officials;

104.3.2. Testimonial or oral declarations from the parties and witnesses;

104.3.3. Expert opinions;

104.3.4. Audio or video recordings;

104.3.5. Documents;

104.3.6. Declarations from the parties; and

104.3.7. Other proof that is relevant to the case.

105. Witnesses

105.1. Witnesses shall tell the absolute and whole truth and shall answer the questions put to them to the best of their knowledge and judgement.

105.2. It is the responsibility of the parties to ensure the appearance of the witnesses requested by them and to pay all costs and expense in connection with their appearance.

106. Anonymous participants in proceedings

106.1. When an individual's testimony could endanger his life or put him or his family or close friends in physical danger, the chairperson may order at the request of the NMIFA that:

106.1.1. The person not be identified in the presence of the parties;

106.1.2. The person not appear at the hearing; and

106.1.3. All or some of the information that could be used to identify the person be included only in a separate, confidential case file.

106.2. In view of all the circumstances and in particular if no other evidence is available to corroborate the testimony of the relevant person and if it is technically possible, the chairperson may exceptionally order, on his own initiative or at the request of one of the parties, that:

- 106.2.1. The voice of the relevant person be distorted;
 - 106.2.2. The face of the relevant person be masked;
 - 106.2.3. The relevant person be questioned outside the hearing room; and
 - 106.2.4. The relevant person be questioned in writing through the chairperson.
- 106.3. Disciplinary measures shall be imposed on anyone who reveals the identity of any person granted anonymity under this provision or any information that could be used to identify such person.

107. Identification of anonymous participants in proceedings

- 107.1. To ensure their safety, persons granted anonymity shall be identified behind closed doors in the absence of the parties.
- 107.2. The identification shall be conducted by the chairperson of the judicial body alone, the deputy chairperson and/or all the members (in attendance at the relevant meeting) of the judicial body together and shall be recorded in minutes containing the relevant person's personal details.
- 107.3. These minutes shall not be communicated to the parties.
- 107.4. The parties shall receive a brief notice which:
- 107.4.1. Confirms that the relevant persons has been formally identified; and
 - 107.4.2. Contains no details that could be used to identify such person.

108. Evaluation of proof

- 108.1. The judicial bodies will have absolute discretion regarding the admissibility of proof and its evaluation.

- 108.2. They may, in particular, take account of the parties' attitudes during proceedings, especially the manner in which they cooperate with the judicial bodies and the secretariat.
- 108.3. The standard of proof shall be to the comfortable satisfaction of the members, bearing in mind the seriousness of the allegation which is made.
- 108.4. The relevant standards of proof in relation to Anti-Doping Rule Violations are set out in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations.

109. Match Officials' reports

- 109.1. Facts contained in Match Officials' reports (and in any supplementary reports and correspondence, and supporting evidence such as photographs and videos, submitted by the Match Officials) are presumed to be accurate.
- 109.2. Proof of the inaccuracy of the contents of a Match Officials' report may be provided
- 109.3. If there is any discrepancy in the reports from the various Match Officials and there are no means of resolving the different versions of the facts, the Referee report is considered authoritative regarding incidents that occurred on the field of play and the Match Commissioner report is considered authoritative regarding incidents that took place outside the field of play.

110. Burden of proof

- 110.1. The burden of proof regarding disciplinary infringement rests on the NMIFA.
- 110.2. The burden of proof in the case of a protest rests on the protesting party.

- 110.3. Any party claiming a right on the basis of an alleged fact shall carry the burden of proving that fact. During the proceedings, the party shall submit all relevant facts and evidence of which the party is aware at that time, or of which the party should have been aware by exercising due care.
- 110.4. The relevant evidentiary burdens in relation to Anti-Doping Rule Violations are set out in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations.

Section 4: Hearings, deliberations and decision

111. Hearings

- 111.1. As a general rule, there are no oral hearings and meetings of the judicial bodies are conducted in private (i.e. without the presence of the Defendant), with the judicial body deciding on the basis of the file.
- 111.2. A party may request for an oral hearing. The chairperson shall decide on any such request subject to Articles 86 and 88. This decision is final and binding and not appealable.
- 111.3. For the avoidance of doubt, no meeting, oral hearing and/or deliberations of a judicial body shall be held in public.

112. Procedure for oral hearing

- 112.1. The chairperson decides on the procedure of any oral hearing.
- 112.2. Once the hearing of evidence has ended, the chairperson allows the person against whom proceedings are being conducted a final opportunity to speak.
- 112.3. The oral hearing terminates with this closing statement.

113. Deliberations

- 113.1. The judicial bodies deliberate privately (i.e. without the presence of the Defendant).
- 113.2. If an oral hearing has occurred, it will immediately be followed by the confidential deliberations of the judicial bodies.
- 113.3. Deliberations are conducted without interruption, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 113.4. The chairperson decides in which order the various questions will be submitted for deliberation.
- 113.5. The members present express their opinions in the order set out by the chairperson, who always speaks last.
- 113.6. The Secretary or Deputy Secretaries have consultative powers only.

114. Form of meetings

- 114.1. The secretariat may arrange the deliberation and decision-making (and where necessary, oral hearings) to be conducted via in-person meeting, telephone conference, video conference or any other method.
- 114.2. The secretariat takes minutes in each meeting.

115. Decision

- 115.1. Subject to Articles 86 and 88, decisions are passed by a simple majority of the members present and eligible to vote.
- 115.2. Every member present shall vote.
- 115.3. If votes are equal, the chairperson has the casting vote.

116. Form and content of the decision

116.1. Without prejudice to the application of Article 117 below, the decision contains:

116.1.1. The composition of the committee;

116.1.2. The names of the parties;

116.1.3. A summary of the facts;

116.1.4. The grounds of the decision;

116.1.5. The provisions on which the decision was based;

116.1.6. The terms of the decision; and

116.1.7. Notice of the channels of appeal.

116.2. The decisions are signed by the General Secretary.

117. Grounds of a decision

117.1. The judicial bodies may decide not to communicate the grounds of a decision and instead communicate only the terms of the decision. At the same time, the parties shall be informed that they have ten (10) days from receipt of the terms of the decision to request, in writing, the grounds of the decision, and that failure to do so will result in the decision becoming final and binding and not appealable.

117.2. The request for the grounds of a decision does not affect the enforcement of the decision, which shall take effect as soon as it is notified, with the exception of orders to pay a sum of money.

- 117.3. If a party requests the grounds of a decision, such grounds will be communicated to the parties in full, written form. The time limit to lodge an appeal, where applicable, begins upon receipt of the grounds of decision. Only the parties to which a decision is addressed can request the grounds.
- 117.4. Any appeal lodged before notification of the grounds of a decision is regarded exclusively as a request for such grounds.

118. Notification of decision

- 118.1. All parties are notified of the decision
- 118.2. Decisions and other documents intended for Players, Teams, Clubs and Officials are addressed to their affiliated Team or Club on condition that it immediately forwards the relevant decisions and documents to the parties concerned.
- 118.2.1. In the event that the documents were not also or solely sent to the party concerned, these documents are considered to have been communicated properly to the ultimate addressee within four (4) days of communication of the documents to the Team or Club (cf. Article 98). Failure by the Team or Club to comply with the aforementioned instruction may result in disciplinary proceedings being undertaken against it in accordance with this Code.

119. Form of notification

- 119.1. Decisions shall be communicated by facsimile, email and/or registered letter to be legally binding.

- 119.2. Any person bound by this Code must ensure that their contact details (e.g. address, telephone number and email address) are valid and kept up to date at all times.

Section 5: Miscellaneous

120. Representation and legal representation

- 120.1. If a party is not required to appear personally, they may be represented or legally represented at their own cost and expense.
- 120.2. Parties are free to choose their own representation and legal representation.
- 120.3. The judicial body can limit the number of legal representatives of a party if deemed excessive.
- 120.4. In all cases, parties must provide written authorization to be represented or legally represented.
- 120.5. If the parties or other persons bound by this Code fail to cooperate in any manner or are dilatory in responding to any request from the Disciplinary Committee, the respective chairperson may, after warning them, charge them with a violation of Article 78.

121. Language

- 121.1. The language used in all proceedings shall be English.
- 121.2. The judicial bodies may use the services of an interpreter. The costs of interpretation shall be borne by the party requiring the interpreter.

122. Obvious errors

122.1. A judicial body may rectify any mistakes in calculation or any other obvious errors in its decisions at any time.

123. Costs and expenses

123.1. Costs and expenses related to proceedings may be imposed by the judicial body on the unsuccessful party, unless otherwise stipulated in this Code.

123.2. The costs of proceedings before the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee shall be borne by the NMIFA, except in protest cases, when they shall be borne by the unsuccessful party.

123.3. If no party is sanctioned, the costs and expenses shall be borne by the NMIFA. Should a party generate unnecessary costs on account of its conduct, costs may be imposed upon it, irrespective of the outcome of the proceedings.

123.4. The judicial body that rules on the substance of the matter decides how costs and expenses shall be allocated and the relevant amounts are stipulated by the chairperson. These decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

124. Enforcement of decisions

124.1. Decisions come into force as soon as they are notified.

Section 6: Procedural rules specific to the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee

125. Commencement

- 125.1. Disciplinary proceedings may be opened by the NMIFA administration and judicial bodies.
- 125.1.1. Ex officio;
 - 125.1.2. On the basis of official reports;
 - 125.1.3. Where a protest has been lodged in accordance with the relevant competition regulations;
 - 125.1.4. At the request of the NMIFA President, NMIFA Executive Committee, or the NMIFA General Secretary;
 - 125.1.5. On the basis of documents received from a public authority; or
 - 125.1.6. Where a complaint has been filed.
- 125.2. Any person or body may report any conduct considered incompatible with NMIFA regulations.
- Such complaints shall be made in writing, including any available evidence.
- 125.3. Match Officials are obliged to report infringements which have come to their notice.
- 125.4. The parties shall be notified of the opening of a proceeding and the possible rule violation. Limited exceptions to this rule may be made for safety and security reasons or if such disclosure interferes with the conduct of the investigation.

126. Investigation

- 126.1. Prior to the opening of disciplinary proceedings, the secretariat shall carry out the necessary preliminary investigation *ex officio* on the basis of the information received pursuant to Article 125.

126.2. If the secretariat deems that there is no *prima facie* case, it may close the preliminary investigation without opening disciplinary proceedings.

126.3. If the secretariat deems that there is a *prima facie* case, it shall open disciplinary proceedings.

126.3.1. The secretariat shall have the authority to hire or appoint external resources to assist in any investigation.

126.4. The secretariat shall inform the party that disciplinary proceedings have been opened.

126.5. Once the investigation has been completed, and the secretariat deems that there is a case, it shall forward charges of misconduct and the full case file to the party and provide the party with an opportunity to be heard.

126.5.1. The content of the full case file may be restricted in accordance with Article 103.

126.6. Once the investigation has been completed, and the secretariat deems that there is no case, disciplinary proceedings shall be closed.

126.6.1. Disciplinary proceedings may be closed, if, among other reasons, the parties reach an agreement, or a party declares bankruptcy.

126.6.2. If disciplinary proceedings have been closed, the secretariat may reopen the investigation if new facts or evidence are discovered within the limitation period for prosecution.

127. Procedural rules for the chairperson or member acting alone

127.1. The procedural rules for governing the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee apply in the same way whenever the chairperson or member decides alone.

Section 7: Procedural rules specific to the NMIFA Appeals Committee

128. Appeal

128.1. An appeal may be lodged to the NMIFA Appeals Committee against any decision passed by the NMIFA

Disciplinary Committee, except:

128.1.1. Where the sanction imposed is:

128.1.1.1. A warning or reprimand;

128.1.1.2. A suspension for less than five (5) Matches or of up to two (2) months (with the exception of doping-related decisions);

128.1.1.3. A fine of less than USD500 imposed on a Team or Club;

128.1.1.4. A fine of less than US300 imposed on all other legal or natural persons; or

128.1.2. Those decisions;

128.1.2.1. Passed in compliance with Article 67 of this Code; or

128.1.2.2. Which this Code sets out are final and binding.

128.2. No appeal is admissible if a party does not request the issuance of a grounds of decision in accordance with Article 117.

128.3. If the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee combines disciplinary measures, an appeal is admissible if at least one of the disciplinary measures imposed exceeds the above limits. In this case, the NMIFA Appeals Committee will only be entitled to examine the sanctions that exceed the above limit.

129. Standing to appeal

129.1. Anyone who:

129.1.1. Has been a party to the proceedings before the first instance; or

129.1.2. Has a legally protected interest justifying amendment or cancellation of the decision, may lodge an appeal to the NMIFA Appeals Committee.

129.2. Teams and Clubs may appeal against decisions sanctioning any party affiliated to it. They shall have the written agreement of the party concerned.

129.3. Teams and Clubs may appeal against decisions sanctioning their Players or Officials. They shall have the written agreement of the party concerned.

130. Time limit for appeal

130.1. Any party intending to appeal must inform the NMIFA Appeals Committee of its intention to do so in writing within three (3) days of notification of the grounds of the decision.

130.2. Within seven (7) days of expiry of the time limit for the declaration of appeal, the appellant must file, in writing, signed and in triplicate, the appeal brief and pay the appeal fee. This must contain the appellant's requests, an account of the facts, evidence, a list of the proposed witnesses (with a brief summary of their expected testimony) and the appellant's conclusions. The appellant is not authorized to produce further written submissions or evidence after the deadline for filing the appeal brief.

130.3. If this requirement has not been computed with, the appeal is not admitted.

130.4. In urgent cases, the chairperson may shorten the deadline for the submission of the reasons for appeal.

- 130.5. Upon receiving a petition of appeal from any party affiliated to NMIFA, the Disciplinary Secretary shall forward it immediately to the NMIFA Appeals Committee.

131. Appeal fee

- 131.1. All appeals shall be accompanied by an appeal fee of USD50 (non-inclusive of bank charges). The appeal fee shall be transmitted to the nominated NMIFA account before the expiry of the time limit for submitting the appeal brief (cf. Article 130.2).
- 131.2. If this requirement has not been complied with, the appeal is not admitted.
- 131.3. This amount will be reimbursed to the appellant if successful or partially successful. Costs and expenses payable by an appellant who is not successful are deducted from this amount. Any remaining amount is reimbursed. If the appeal fee is insufficient, the appellant will be ordered to pay the difference.
- 131.4. If the appeal is considered to be improper, costs and expenses shall be paid in addition to the appeal fee.

132. Effects of the appeal

- 132.1. An appeal results in the case being reviewed de novo by the NMIFA Appeals Committee.
- 132.2. An appeal does not have a suspensive effect except with regard orders to pay a sum of money.

133. Procedural rules for the chairperson or member acting alone

- 133.1. The procedural rules governing the NMIFA Appeals Committee apply in the same way whenever the chairperson or member decides alone.

134. Body of last instance

- 134.1. The NMIFA Appeals Committee rules, in principle, as a body in the last instance.
- 134.2. The right is reserved for an appeal to be made to the Court of Arbitration for Sport as set out in Article 135.

Section 8: Court for Arbitration for Sport (CAS)

135. Right to Appeal

- 135.1. The NMIFA statutes stipulate which decisions passed by the judicial bodies may be appealed before the

Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).
- 135.2. The relevant competition regulations may contain further stipulations.

Section 9: Provisional measures

136. Request

- 136.1. Upon request, or ex officio, the chairperson of a judicial body or a member designated by the chairperson may

provisionally pronounce, alter, or revoke a sanction:
 - 136.1.1. If an infringement appears to have been committed;
 - 136.1.2. A decision on the main issue cannot be taken early enough; and
 - 136.1.3. In an emergency.

136.2. In similar circumstances, the chairperson may issue other provisional measures at his discretion, especially to ensure compliance with a sanction already in force.

136.3. A request to provisionally pronounce, alter, or revoke a sanction issued by the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee shall be lodged:

136.3.1. Only after receipt of the grounds of the decision (cf. Article 117);

136.3.2. Simultaneously with an intention to appeal (cf. Article 130); and

136.3.3. Within the same time limit for the submission of an intention to appeal (cf. Article 130).

136.4. Any provisional measure pronouncing, altering, or revoking a sanction issued by the NMIFA Disciplinary Committee shall be automatically annulled if the simultaneous appeal fails to be admitted or is withdrawn.

137. Procedure

137.1. The chairperson shall make his decision based on the evidence available at the time.

137.2. The chairperson is not obliged to hear the parties.

138. Decision

138.1. The chairperson delivers his decision immediately.

138.2. That decision shall be implemented immediately.

139. Duration

139.1. Provisional measures may not be valid for longer than sixty (60) days.

139.2. This period may be extended only once by up to thirty (30) days.

139.3. If a sanction has been pronounced provisionally, the duration shall be offset against any final sanction.

140. Appeal

140.1. An appeal against a decision regarding provisional measures may be lodged before the chairperson of the NMIFA Appeals Committee or a member designated by the chairperson.

140.2. The time limit for lodging the appeal is two (2) days commencing from the notification of then decision.

140.3. The reasons for appeal shall be sent to the NMIFA Main Office by hardcopy or email within the same time limit.

140.4. The appeal fee of USD50 (non-inclusive of bank charges) shall be transmitted to the nominated NMIFA account within the same time limit.

140.4.1. If this requirement has not been complied with, the appeal is not admitted.

140.4.2. This amount will be reimbursed to the appellant if successful or partially successful. Costs and expenses payable by an appellant who is not successful are deducted from this amount. Any remaining amount is reimbursed. If the appeal fee is insufficient, the appellant will be ordered to pay the difference.

140.5. The appeal shall not have a suspensive effect.

Section 10: Review of decisions

141. Review

- 141.1. A review may be requested after a legally binding decision has been passed if a party discovers facts or proof that would have resulted in a more favorable decision and that, even with due diligence, could not have been produced sooner.
- 141.2. A request for review shall be made within ten (10) days of discovering the reasons for review.
- 141.3. The limitation period for submitting a request for review is one (1) year after the enforcement of the decision.
- 141.4. The decision on the request for review shall be made by the chairperson of the judicial body who made the legally binding decision. This decision is final and binding and not appealable.

CHAPTER FIVE: ENFORCEMENT

142. Official language

- 142.1. This Code is issued in English

143. Scope of the Code, omissions, custom, doctrine and jurisprudence

- 143.1. This Code governs every subject to which the text or the meaning of its provisions refers.

143.2. If there are any omissions in this Code, the judicial bodies will decide in accordance with legal custom or, in the absence of legal custom, in accordance with rules they would lay down as if they were acting as legislators.

143.3. The judicial bodies shall draw upon precedents already established by sports doctrine and jurisprudence.

144. Specific disciplinary rules

144.1. Specific disciplinary rules may be introduced for the duration of a final NMIFA competition. They may depart from the rules stipulated within this Code.

144.2. Such rules shall be communicated to the participating Teams in accordance with the relevant competition regulations.

145. Members of the NMIFA

145.1. The NMIFA members are obliged to observe the NMIFA statutes, and regulations, including this Code .

146. NMIFA Statutes

146.1. To the extent that this Code is inconsistent with the NMIFA Statutes, the NMIFA Statutes shall prevail.

147. Adoption

147.1. The NMIFA Executive Committee ratified this Code in the Northern Mariana Islands, on XXX X, 2024.

147.2. This Code comes into force on XXX X, 2024.

For the NMIFA Executive Committee

President, Jerry Tan

General Secretary, Rosauro D. Zapanta

Transitory Provisions

1. The term of chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and members of the judicial bodies appointed by the NMIFA

Congress shall be **four (4) years** when Congress is held.

APPENDIX 1: SCALE OF FINES FOR SPECTATOR MISCONDUCT

1.1. This is to be read in accordance with Article 69 of the Code.

1.2. This relates to non-aggravated, first-time offences.

- 1.3. An offence is aggravated, without limitation, where:
- 1.3.1. The number of objects utilized or persons involved (as appropriate) in the commission of the offence is higher than the corresponding highest number in the penalty section below;
 - 1.3.2. An object utilized to commit the offence strikes a Player, Official, Match Official, or any other individual in attendance at a Match;
 - 1.3.3. The offence involves an attempt to physically harm an individual;
 - 1.3.4. As a result of the offence, an individual is physically harmed;
 - 1.3.5. As a result of the offence, damage occurs to any object related to the Match;
 - 1.3.6. The offence involves an element of racism, nationalism, or any other type of discrimination in violation of **Article 3 of the NMIFA Statutes;** and
 - 1.3.7. It is not the first offence committed by the spectators affiliated to the relevant Team or Club.
- 1.4. Where the offence is aggravated, any further sanctions as listed in this Code may be imposed by the judicial body.
- 1.5. The list of offences includes, without limitation, the following:
- 1.5.1. Letting off incendiary devices or fireworks; flashing lasers; throwing water bottles (full or partially filled, glass bottles, aluminum cans, stones, plastic, stadium seats or stadium property; displaying insulting, religious, or political messages or images in any form; field invasion.
- Penalty: Fine of at least USD50.**
- 1.5.2. The severity of the fine shall be subject to the gravity of the offence
- 1.6. Where an offence results in the delay of a live-streamed Match, and additional fine may be imposed.