

Neyland Yacht Club: Complaints Policy and Procedure

1. Policy Statement

Neyland Yacht Club (NYC) is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and well-managed environment for all members, visitors, and participants across all club activities (including sailing, rowing, and sub-aqua).

In accordance with **Section 3, Rule 23** of the Neyland Yacht Club Constitution, any complaints regarding the management of club premises, facilities, or the bar and restaurant operated on club premises are taken seriously and addressed systematically to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all voting and non-voting membership classes (Single, Family, Senior, Student, Junior, and Temporary Members) as defined in **Section 3, Rule 7** of the Constitution, as well as visitors and event competitors using club facilities under **Rule 24**.

What Is Covered

- **Club Management & Premises:** Issues regarding club assets, property maintenance, safety, or administrative management (**Section 3, Rules 20 & 23**).
 - **Bar & Restaurant Operations:** Catering standards, service quality, hygiene, or staff conduct on premises (**Section 3, Rule 23**).
 - **Member Conduct & Disciplinary Issues:** Allegations of member conduct that is unworthy or injurious to the interests of the Club (**Section 3, Rule 19**).
 - **Membership Refusal or Cancellation:** Appeals against refusal or termination of membership (**Section 3, Rules 6, 14, & 19**).
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3. Principles of Procedure

- **Constitutional Compliance:** All complaints and disciplinary proceedings will adhere strictly to the powers and structures defined in the Neyland Yacht Club Constitution.
- **Confidentiality:** Complaints will be handled with appropriate discretion. Information will only be shared with Management Committee members or individuals directly involved in the investigation.

- **Natural Justice & Right of Reply:** Before any disciplinary action is taken under **Rule 19**, the member concerned will receive written notice of the allegations and a full opportunity to provide a written explanation or make an explanation to the Committee.
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4. Complaint Handling Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, complainants are encouraged to resolve minor operational or administrative issues informally by speaking directly to the relevant officers or individuals.

If an informal resolution is not possible or the matter is serious, the complaint must proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Written Complaint

In accordance with **Section 3, Rule 23**:

1. **Submission:** All formal complaints must be addressed in writing via email to the **Club Secretary**.
2. **Details Required:**
 - Name and contact details of the complainant.
 - Specific details of the incident, concern, or venue issue.
 - Dates, times, and names of any witnesses.
3. **Acknowledgement:** The Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the written complaint within 5 working days.

Stage 3: Investigation & Committee Review

1. **Review:** The Secretary will log the complaint and refer it to the **Management Committee (Section 4, Rule 27)**.
2. **Special Delegation:** The Committee may assign an Officer or a dedicated sub-committee to investigate the matter (**Section 4, Rule 37**).
3. **Emergency/Immediate Action:**
 - In cases involving temporary users or competitors under **Rule 24**, any 3 members of the Committee retain the right to expel individuals temporarily or permanently from club premises (**Rule 25**).

- In cases of suspected member misconduct (**Rule 19**), the Committee will issue a written request for an explanation from the member concerned before taking a vote.

Stage 4: Decision & Communication

1. **Voting:** Decision-making by the Management Committee requires a quorum of five members (**Section 4, Rule 35**) and is resolved by a simple majority vote (**Section 4, Rule 19 & 34**).
2. **Outcome Notification:** The Secretary will communicate the Committee's decision and any actions taken to the complainant in writing within 28 days of receipt of the complaint.

5. Disciplinary Sanctions & Appeals

Disciplinary Actions (Rule 19)

If a complaint regarding member conduct is substantiated, the Management Committee may apply sanctions, including:

- Formal written warning.
- Temporary suspension of membership for a specified period.
- Expulsion from the Club.
- Or other action as it may see fit.

Note: Upon suspension or expulsion, no membership fees will be refunded, and all club property/trophies must be returned immediately. Expulsion may result in the disposal of boats/trailers in accordance with Rule 69.

Appeals Process (Rules 6, 14, & 19)

If a member or applicant wishes to appeal against a refusal of membership, suspension, expulsion or other sanctions taken by the committee:

1. **Notice of Appeal:** A written notice of appeal must be submitted to the Secretary within 14 days of receiving the Committee's decision.
2. **General Meeting Review:** The appeal will be brought before the Members of the Club at a General Meeting (Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting), where the decision of the general membership will be final.