



# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

POLICY

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# 1. Purpose

Hills District Tennis Association Inc. is committed to providing all members of our tennis community with a welcoming, safe and inclusive tennis environment that promotes the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of all participants.

This Code of Behaviour sets out the standards of behaviour expected of players, coaches, parents/guardians, and any other spectators whilst participating or attending any events/programs/competitions held, sanctioned or hosted by Hills District Tennis Association.

The Code of Behaviour seeks to:

- promote sporting conduct among players, coaches, parents/guardians and spectators, and respect for the spirit of tennis;
- establish a framework for violations of behaviour standards;
- put in place processes to manage incidents involving players, coaches, parents/guardians and spectators;
- increase public confidence by consistently and efficiently dealing with behaviour incidents;
- and protect the image, reputation and integrity of tennis in Australia. The behaviours adopted by all stakeholders can assist in connecting more people to tennis.

All tennis stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all and maintain standards of excellence, professionalism, humility and integrity at all times. This is the case not only for competing players, but for all members of the tennis community (coaches, parents, guardians, spectators, etc). Poor spectator behaviour is considered as serious as poor player behaviour.

# 2. Application

This Code of Behaviour applies to violations occurring during events/competitions/programs sanctioned, hosted or promoted by Hills District Tennis Association.

Incidents involving harassment, discrimination, abuse (not verbal abuse within the Code of Behaviour) and vilification (all of which are defined within the Member Protection Policy) may be dealt with pursuant to the Tennis Australia Member Protection Policy and not these guidelines.

It also applies to instances of unacceptable behaviour (as deemed by Tennis Australia) that may occur off precinct during competitions, which will be dealt with as per the Tennis Australia Disciplinary Policy.

This Code of Behaviour applies to (hereinafter referred to as 'participants'):

- employees, volunteers, and coaches
- players and members
- parents, guardians, and spectators

A HDTA Representative refers to any HDTA competition official, court supervisor, committee member, administration staff member, coaches who have a contract to operate at our venues, and volunteers.

## 3. Expected Behaviours

**3.1 *Everyone involved in Tournaments and Competitions, whether they are players, coaches, parents or other stakeholders, are custodians of the sport of tennis, and responsible for upholding the spirit of tennis. This requires an ongoing commitment to:***

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others;
- Act with honesty, integrity, humility and professionalism;
- Compete to the best of your ability at all times;
- Take responsibility for your own actions;
- Read, understand and comply with all of Tennis Australia's and Hills District Tennis Association's standards, rules, regulations, policies and by-laws as amended from time to time.
- If you have queries, ask someone;
- Respect opposition players and other spectators;
- Respect the law and act in accordance with it;
- Act as positive role models for other tennis participants and the community generally;
- Promote the sport in a positive light;
- Respect the role of officials and administrators whose job it is to ensure that competitions are conducted fairly and according to the rules;
- Respect the role of any employees or volunteers who assist in the administration and/or delivery of the sport of tennis.

**3.2 *These values and behaviours represent the spirit in which tennis is to be played and spectated in Australia. In applying this Code of Behaviour, these values and behaviours will be taken into account, and how they can best be promoted and upheld.***

## 4. Tennis Etiquette

### 4.1 **Serving:**

- Make sure the server always has two balls at their end of the court. When you are feeding balls up the court, hit or roll them gently within reach of the server, don't delay play by spraying them around.
- The receiver should not return the first service if it is an obvious fault – let it go by or ground it.

### 4.2 **Line calls:**

- If you are unsure as to whether your opponent's shot was in or out, it **MUST** be called IN.
- Don't ask off court spectators, including parents, coaches to make line calls or decide the score or other on-court matters.

### 4.3 **Balls:**

- To retrieve a ball from another court or to return a ball to another court, wait until there is a break in play on that court.
- Don't return balls when the server is ready to serve – wait until the end of the next point.
- Players are allowed to ask their opponent to remove the ball from the court prior to the commencement of the point.

- Keep tennis balls in your hand, in a pocket, in a ball clip, or at the back centre of the court against the fence.
- When ball persons are not available, all balls on your side of the net are your responsibility to pick up and return directly to the server.

#### **4.4 Behaviour:**

- Screaming regularly and loudly, whether winning and/or losing a point is likely to upset others' play and may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Constant open celebration aimed at your opponent may be considered intimidation and therefore may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Don't criticise your partner or opponent, be positive and offer encouragement instead.
- Do not stall, sulk, complain or practice gamesmanship.

#### **4.5 End of match:**

- Win or lose always shake hands with your opponent at the end of the match and thank them for playing.
- Walking off the court at the end of a match without shaking hands or touching racquets with your opponent may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

## **5. Violations**

### **5.1 Commencement of play:**

- A player is not ready to commence play within twenty (20) minutes of their match being scheduled.

### **5.2 Physical abuse:**

- A participant shall not at any time physically abuse any Official, opponent, spectator or other person.
- Physical abuse is the unauthorised touching of another person.

### **5.3 Verbal abuse:**

- A participant must not at any time directly or indirectly verbally abuse any official, opponent, spectator or other person within the venue.
- Verbal abuse includes a statement about an official, opponent, sponsor, Hills District Tennis Association, spectator or other person that implies dishonesty or is derogatory, insulting or otherwise abusive.

### **5.4 Best effort:**

- A player must always compete to the best of their ability and use their best efforts during a match.

### **5.5 Coaching:**

- A player must not receive coaching during a match (including the warm-up).
- Coaching is permitted when a match has been formally completed or suspended.
- Communications of any kind, audible, visible, or electronic between a player and parents, guardians, spectators, visitors, may be construed as coaching.

### **5.6 Audible obscenity:**

- A participant must not use obscene language.

- An audible obscenity is the use of words commonly known and understood to be profane (whether in English or any other language) and uttered clearly and loudly enough to be heard by another player, spectators, or a HDTA representatives.

#### **5.7 Visible obscenity:**

- A participant must not make obscene gestures of any kind.
- A visible obscenity is the making of signs by a participant with their hands, a racquet, tennis balls or any other equipment, that are commonly understood to have an obscene meaning.

#### **5.8 Abuse of equipment/racquet:**

- A participant must not commit an act of abuse of racquets or equipment. An abuse of racquets or equipment includes:
  - Violently or with anger or frustration hitting, kicking or throwing a racquet or other equipment
  - the intentional and violent hitting of the net, court, umpire's chair or other fixture
  - the intentional or reckless throwing of a racquet in a dangerous or potentially dangerous manner, whether on or off court

#### **5.9 Spectator misconduct**

- Any person spectating a match in a Hills District Tennis Association run event/competition/program or attending a Hills District Tennis Association venue must not engage in any of the following:
  - Intimidating, threatening or abusive behaviour toward players, coaches, parents, other spectators or persons at the venue, staff or volunteers;
  - Causing a disruption to an event/competition/program or a match in progress;
  - Making or causing to be made disrespectful or inappropriate comments (in English or any other language) or gestures towards players, coaches, parents, spectators and other persons on-site or involved in the event/competition/program;
  - Providing inappropriate instructions, comments or direction to a player including both the spectator's own player or the opponent, of any type
    - (\*Note, this may also be considered as "Coaching" in accordance with paragraph 5.5 above); and
  - Any other inappropriate behaviour as determined by a HDTA representative.

#### **5.10 Unsportsmanlike conduct / general misconduct:**

- This provision prohibits the following:
  - any conduct which may reasonably be regarded unacceptable or unsporting;
  - failing to give due regard to the authority of Hills District Tennis Association representatives and the rights of opponents, spectators and others;
  - blatant, and/or repeated incorrect line calling on purpose;
  - any conduct which has the effect or potential to prejudice or be detrimental to the reputation of a participant, the event/competition/program, Hills District Tennis Association or the sport of tennis generally;
  - any conduct which has the effect or potential to bring a participant, the event/competition/program, Hills District Tennis Association or the sport of tennis into disrepute;
  - conduct that does not meet the standards of acceptable behaviour prescribed in Section 3 of this Code of Behaviour;
  - any conduct that is clearly abusive or intimidating toward another person;

- the giving, making, issuing, authorising or endorsing of any public statement having, or designed to have, an effect prejudicial or detrimental to the best interests of an event/competition/program or the officiating and administration of the event/competition/program.

#### **5.11 Leaving the court:**

- A player shall not leave the court area during a set with the exception of medical reasoning or inclement weather.
- A breach of this section may subject a player to an immediate forfeit.

#### **5.12 Dress and equipment:**

- Every player shall dress and present themselves for play in clean and customarily acceptable tennis attire.
- A player who violates this provision may be ordered by a HDTA representative to change their attire immediately.
- Failure by a player to comply with such an order may result in an immediate forfeit.

#### **5.13 Unreasonable delays:**

- A match shall commence after the expiration of the warm-up period.
- Thereafter, play shall be continuous and a player shall not unreasonably delay a match as provided for in the Hills District Tennis Association competition rules.
- Complaints about unreasonable delay will be assessed with consideration of circumstances and the player's conduct
- Specific examples of unreasonable delay includes:
  - having a medical condition and the player failing to recommence play after any permitted medical time out or evaluation associated with the medical condition;
  - refusing to play;
  - or not returning to the court to recommence play within any permitted or prescribed times.

## **6. Disciplinary Process**

### **6.1 Violation report:**

- A report regarding a participant's behaviour must be provided to the Association by a HDTA representative, a witness of the incident, or the complainant within 14 days of the date of the incident occurring.
- The report must be given in writing (electronic or hand-written) to the Association, and must indicate that the participant has,
  - refused, or neglected, to comply with a provision, or provisions of the Code of Behaviour; or
  - Threatened to act, or has wilfully acted, in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Association.
- After receiving the violation report, a representative from the Association will:
  - acknowledge receipt of the violation report, within 7 days;
  - proceed the investigation process, including communicating with all parties, within 21 days, unless otherwise agreed between parties

### **6.2 On The Spot and Minor Violations:**

- Any HDTA representative can provide an on the spot warning or forfeit a match for any behaviour that has been reported to them or they have personally witnessed which they deem a violation of this Code of Behaviour.

## **6.2 Investigation and Notification Process:**

- The HDTA Committee or HDTA representative may refuse to deal with a complaint if the Committee considers the complaint is trivial or vexatious.
- The Committee or HDTA representative will use all possible means to investigate the incident, and then if required, determine an appropriate penalty.
- The more information provided about the incident including witnesses will assist in this process.
- The HDTA Disciplinary Committee will deal with moderate to serious violations. The Disciplinary Committee will comprise of:
  - the relevant competition's Competition Secretary
  - a member of the Committee of Management
  - Any additional representatives appointed by the Committee of Management
- Complaints against members:
  - If the disciplinary committee decides to deal with a moderate/serious complaint, the committee will:
    - serve notice of the complaint on the member, and
    - give the member fourteen (14) days from the day the notice is served on the member within which to make submissions to the committee about the complaint, and
    - consider any submissions made by the member.

## **6.3 Penalties:**

- The Disciplinary Committee or a HDTA representative, after investigation, may impose disciplinary action. The Disciplinary Committee or a HDTA representative will apply the Appendix A penalty schedule below as they see fit, with the following points being taken into consideration:
  - the nature of the violation;
  - the evidence provided;
  - any previous violations;
  - the impact of the violation.
- Suspension or expulsion of members:
  - The Committee of Management may, by resolution, expel or suspend a member from the Association if, after considering the complaint, the Committee is satisfied that:
    - the facts alleged in the complaint have been proved, and
    - the expulsion or suspension is warranted.
  - A individual will cease to be a member of the Association if they are expelled. Membership fees and any activity/competitions fees paid to the date of expulsion or suspension will not be refunded.
  - If the Committee expels or suspends the member, the Secretary will, within 7 days of that action being taken, give the member written notice of:
    - the action taken, and
    - the reasons given by the Committee for taking the action, and
    - the member's right of appeal (detailed in section 7).
  - The expulsion or suspension of the member does not take effect until the later of the following:
    - the day the period within which the member is entitled to exercise the member's right of appeal expires, or
    - if the member exercises the member's right of appeal within the period - the day the Association confirms the resolution (details in section 7).



## 7. Member's Right of Appeal

### 7.1 *Appeal Process:*

- A member may appeal against a resolution of the committee to suspend or expel by lodging a notice of appeal with the Association Secretary within 7 days of being served notice of the resolution to suspend or expel.
- The member may include in addition to their notice of appeal:
  - a statement of the grounds on which the member intends to rely for the purposes of the appeal.
- The Secretary will notify the Committee that the Secretary has received a notice of appeal.
- If notified that a notice has been received, the Committee will call a general meeting of the Association to be held within 28 days of the day the notice was received.
- At the general meeting:
  - no business other than the question of the appeal is to be transacted, and
  - the member will be given an opportunity to state the member's case orally or in writing, or both, and
  - the Committee will be given the opportunity to state the Committee's case orally or in writing, or both, and
  - the members present will vote by secret ballot on the question of whether the suspension or expulsion resolution should be confirmed or revoked.
- The appeal will be determined by a simple majority of votes cast by the members.

## Appendix A: Penalty Schedule

<i>Offence</i>	<i>Penalty</i>	<i>Examples (not limited too)</i>
Minor Offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official Warning</li> <li>• Match forfeited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsportsmanlike conduct by refusing to shake hands at the end of a match.</li> <li>• Failing to commence play within twenty (20) minutes of the match start time.</li> </ul>
Moderate Offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of competition points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple warnings given for minor offences</li> <li>• Player receiving coaching from the side-line throughout competition play</li> </ul>
Serious Offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension from one or more HDTA activities for a set period of time</li> <li>• Expulsion from HDTA and membership cessation</li> <li>• Spectator suspension or ban from attending HDTA activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical or verbal abuse towards another player, spectator, or HDTA representative</li> <li>• Multiple warnings given for minor/moderate offences</li> </ul>

\*The purpose of this register is to provide guidelines around the use of penalties within HDTA run activities. Penalties imposed are not limited to this register.\*

Minor offence penalties can be imposed by any HDTA representative and can also be imposed on the spot. Any appeals to a minor offence penalty will be escalated to the HDTA Disciplinary Committee.