

RECOGNISING & RESPONDNG TO DISCRIMINATION IN FOOTBALL

A GUIDE FOR STEWARDS

PAWB
EVERYONE

RECOGNISING & RESPONDING TO DISCRIMINATION IN FOOTBALL: A GUIDE FOR STEWARDS

Some people do not feel confident in recognising and responding to discrimination in football. This guide provides support for Match stewards to be able to recognise, respond to and report discriminatory behaviour, in line with the Football Associaiton of Wales/UEFA/FIFA Discrimination regulations.

WHAT IS DISCRIMINAITON?

Discrimination is treating someone less favourably than someone else because of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, skin colour, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, language, ethnic, natural or social origin, political opinion or wealth. (See FAW/UEFA/FIFA Discrimination Regulations).

Discriminatory behaviour ranges from verbal abuse, physical attacks, exclusion from activities or opportunities and can occur in person or via social media. Discrimination can be conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional.

WHAT DOES DISCRIMINATION LOOK LIKE IN FOOTBALL?

- **Name-calling, insults and derogative jokes / "banter".**
- **Refusal to co-operate with someone because of a particular characteristic i.e. skin colour or sexual orientation.**
- **Provocative behaviour such as the wearing of discriminatory badges or crests and displaying discriminatory banners/flags or slogans.**
- **Ridicule of a person because of a protected characteristic.**
- **Derogative comments or gestures.**
- **Incitement to others to behave in a discriminative way.**
- **Physical assault or verbal abuse and threat.**

Any discriminatory behaviour or stereotyping is not acceptable in football, even when someone says to you it was just 'banter' or a joke, even when someone you think may have been victimised tells you it was 'banter'.

The definition of a discriminatory incident is "any incident which is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person."

If you allow one or two people to joke about discrimination you are therefore complicit in the conduct and effectively normalising discriminatory behaviour. Whilst those people may not think anything of a comment, another person might feel discriminated against. The intent behind language and actions doesn't necessarily alter the impact words and behaviour can have on someone.

By ignoring or dismissing discriminatory behaviour, you are setting the precedent that it is okay to treat somebody less favourably because of who they are. You are also showing the suspected victim that you believe it is acceptable to be treated differently and receive discrimination. It is important to be consistent and take action at all times.

LANGUAGE TERMINOLOGY & DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES IN FOOTBALL

WHY IS LANGUAGE IMPORTANT?

Language is a very powerful method of structuring attitudes. Language and terminology can hugely influence how people perceive themselves, others, and the world around them. Language and terminology can contribute to the creation and perpetuation of stereotyping and belief systems.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- **Develop your own awareness of, and sensitivity to, the oppressive and discriminatory potential of language.**
- **Be aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable and why.**
- **Acknowledge that certain language and words are unacceptable regardless of whether or not they are intentionally used to hurt. The intent behind language doesn't necessarily alter the effect words can have.**

It is everyone's responsibility to challenge and report all use of discriminatory language, regardless of intent, following the Club's and stadium's processes.

Guidelines outlining what terms are acceptable and unacceptable in football can be found HERE

GLOBAL GUIDE TO DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES IN FOOTBALL

It is essential to develop an understanding of the commonly displayed discriminatory practices, prohibited symbols and codes inside football stadiums across the world. To support with this FARE has produced comprehensive guides which draw on expert submissions and knowledge gathered from the Fare Observer System at UEFA and FIFA international Club and National Team events.

While not an exhaustive list, these guides highlight common discriminatory practices observed in football. It's important to note they are not intended as a definitive list of prohibited symbols and codes leading to automatic disciplinary proceedings. Each incident will be assessed individually, considering its unique context. Outlines the commonly displayed discriminatory practices and symbols inside football stadiums across the world.

Access the guide HERE


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OBSERVING & CHALLENGING

KEY OBSERVATION POINTS

There are specific times during a match to pay close attention for any discriminatory actions or displays of banners, these include:

- **Shortly before and immediately after kick-off.**
- **Beginning of the 2nd half.**
- **Goals scored by any team (pay attention to who scored the goal and the Spectators reaction)**
- **Pay attention to Spectator's reactions to stadium announcements.**
- **Actions during the 88th minute of the game. (The number 88 stands for the greeting "Heil Hitler"). It is often printed on football fan shirts or used as part of the name of neo-Nazi supporter groups.**
- **Pay attention to the Spectator's reaction when a player attempts to take a throw-in or corner kick next to their stand.**
- **Some booing or derogatory chanting/actions might be heard when a specific player receives the ball during the match.**
- **Pay attention if there are any attempts to silence or stop discriminatory actions by other fans in the stadium e.g. whistling, or other attempts to stop discriminatory actions by other fans.**

EFFECTIVE CHALLENGE TOOLKIT

The following guidelines aim to help Match Stewards effectively challenge any discriminatory behaviour.

DIRECT CHALLENGE

Challenge attitudes and behaviour, rather than the person. Ignoring issues won't make them go away, and silence sends the message that you are in agreement with such attitudes and behaviours. Make it clear that you will not tolerate derogative language and or actions. You should directly challenge any incidents in line with the Club's and stadium's processes.

QUESTION & INFORM

Take responsibility for educating yourself about issues surrounding equality and discrimination. You will be more equipped and able to confront discriminatory attitudes and behaviour with more confidence and can provide accurate information when challenging stereotypes, derogatory attitudes and behaviour while playing a key role in helping to re-educate people.

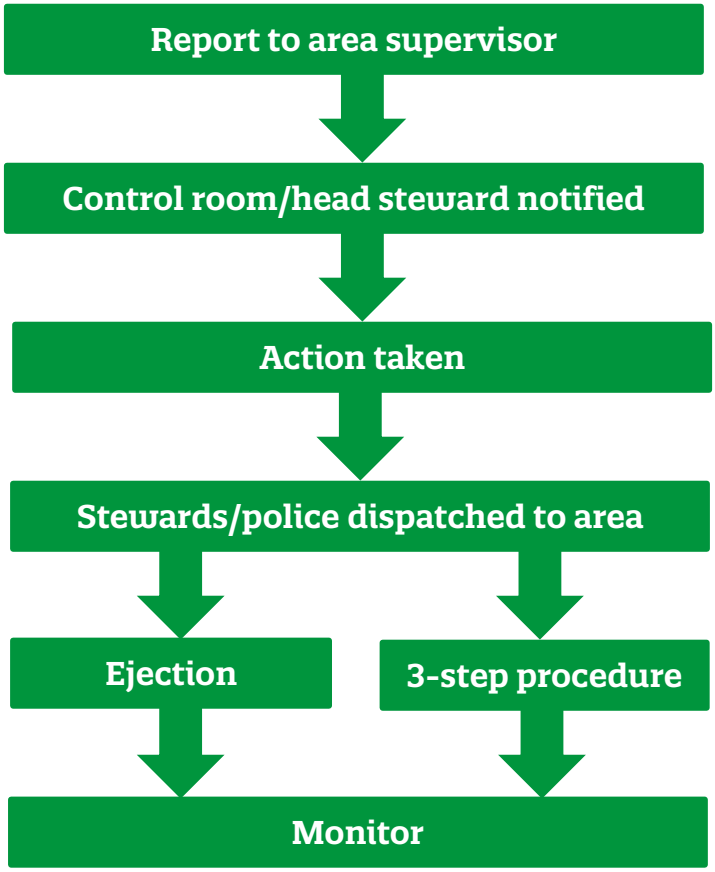
Try to ask questions to discover someone's understanding and intention of any comments or negative behaviour, which can also help to gain further information to include in the post-match debriefing and report.

You can access the FAW's Challenging Discrimination in Football online course HERE


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RESPONDING TO DISCRIMINATION

Match stewards must be aware of their responsibilities if a discriminatory incident or behaviour takes place during a match. If the occasion arises and the steward witnesses or has been notified of discriminatory behaviour, then they should act in accordance with the Club's and stadium's procedures.



3 STEP PROCEDURE

Officials should follow the UEFA 3-step procedure when an incident of a discriminatory nature occurs in relation to supporters. This includes the presence of discriminatory banners at the stadium. (See appendix). Referees have the power to stop, suspend or even abandon a match if an incident of a discriminatory nature occurs.

For a first incident during the game as a first step, they will stop the game and ask for an announcement to be made over the public address system (where available) requesting the public to immediately stop such discriminatory behaviour. (See appendix). If a particular offender is identified then they should be pointed out to the stewards/security in attendance at the game for them to deal with.

For a second incident, the referee may suspend the match for a period of time (for example 5 to 10 minutes) and request the teams go to the dressing rooms. A further announcement shall be made over the public address system to the public.

As a third and final step, if the discriminatory behaviour has not ceased, and after coordination with any security/safety officers present, the referee may abandon the match as a last resort.


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FOLLOW UP ACTION

REPORTING DISCRIMINATORY INCIDENTS

WHY REPORT?

- Reporting demonstrates discrimination is not acceptable in football, promoting a positive ethos where everyone is valued and given equal opportunities.
- Reporting gains trust and confidence and it is important that victims know that any incident they report will be taken seriously and investigated fully and fairly.
- By not reporting incidents, discriminatory attitudes by the perpetrator may continue to be unchallenged and victims may remain unsupported and affected.
- Reporting helps identify any patterns of discriminatory incidents, allowing Clubs and Football Associations to develop strategies to prevent or challenge issues of discrimination and to monitor the success of those they have put in place.
- Reporting can identify any training needs.
- Reporting suspected discriminatory incidents promotes the elimination of discrimination and the fostering of good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

RECORDING KEY INFORMATION

It is important to record the seat number(s)/row and stand of the perpetrators. (The police may complete this process themselves.)

If there are bystanders/witnesses, try to obtain their account of the incident and where possible record their details. (The police may complete this process themselves.)

Stewards should also complete their own report of the incident if they were also a witness. If they did not, they should report what was reported to them (by whom) and what their response was.

This key information will be important when investigating any incident and witnesses may be called upon by the police. It will also aid with monitoring areas where incidents have occurred in the future.

MONITORING DISCRIMINATORY INCIDENTS

The Club/stadium must have an incident report log to record and monitor any incidents that have occurred, along with the outcome of the response.

This log is especially important for those incidents where it was not possible to identify an individual. It can be used to inform stewards within the same area of the stadium to monitor the area closely during future matches.

APPENDIX

STADIUM ANNOUNCEMENT TEMPLATE – 3-STEP PROCEDURE

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

Attention please – This is an important security announcement:
Because of discriminatory behaviour amongst spectators, which is interfering with the game, the referee has indicated that they may have to suspend the match.

Discrimination in football stadiums will not be tolerated. Please be in no doubt that the game will be suspended, and may be abandoned, if discriminatory behaviour continues amongst spectators.

Help everyone enjoy the game and say No to discrimination!

Thank you.

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

Attention please – This is an important security announcement:
Because of continuing discriminatory behaviour amongst spectators, the match has been suspended for X minutes *(5 to 10)*. The teams will go back to their dressing rooms.

We remind you once again that discrimination in football stadiums will not be tolerated. If discriminatory behaviour amongst the crowd continues, then the match will be abandoned and appropriate disciplinary or criminal sanctions will be taken against the spectators and Clubs involved.

We repeat that this match will be abandoned if there is continuing discriminatory behaviour amongst spectators.

Thank you

THIRD ANNOUNCEMENT

Attention please – This is an important security announcement:
We regret to inform you that, because of continuing discrimintory behaviour amongst spectators, which is interfering with the game, the referee has decided to abandon the match. We repeat: this match has been abandoned. All spectators are now requested to leave the stadium in an orderly fashion.

In the interests of safety, all spectators are also asked to take their time when leaving the ground and to follow the instructions of the stewards and security personnel.

Further statements on the consequences of the abandonment of the match will be made by the Club on its website in the following days.



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