



Bowls Alberta



Appeal Policy

Policy Statement

Bowls Alberta (BA) wishes to enable disputes with members to be dealt with fairly, expeditiously and affordably within the BA Association without recourse to external legal procedures.

Definitions

These terms will have these meanings in this policy:

“*Appellant*” - The party appealing a decision.

“*Respondent*” - The body whose decision is being appealed.

“*BA member*” - All categories of membership defined in the Bowls Alberta Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by or engaged in activities with Bowls Alberta, including but not limited to, directors, officers, volunteers, coaches, athletes, officials, members, administrators and spectators.

Application of this Policy

Any BA member will have the right to appeal a decision of the BA Board of Directors, assigned panel, or individual who has been delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of BA, provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal as set out in Section 8 of this Policy subject to the limits in Section 6 and 11 of this Policy.

1. This Policy will apply to decisions made by BA relating to eligibility, selection or discipline.
2. This Policy will not apply to decisions relating to:
 - a) Infractions for drug offences which are dealt with pursuant to the *Canadian Anti-Doping Program* or any successor policy;
 - b) The rules of lawn bowls or disputes over competition rules;
 - c) Policies and procedures established by BA and other entities;
 - d) Issues of operational structure, staffing, employment or volunteer opportunities;
 - e) Commercial matters for which another dispute resolution process exists under a contract or applicable law;
 - f) Issues of budgeting and budget implementation;
 - g) Discipline matters and decisions arising during events organized by entities other than BA, which are dealt with pursuant to the policies of these other entities;
 - h) Disputes arising within competitions which have their own appeal procedures; and
 - i) Any decisions made under Sections 6 and 11 of this Policy.

Timing of Appeal

3. BA Members who wish to appeal a decision will have fourteen (14) days from the date on which they received notice of the decision, to submit in writing to the office of BA the following:
 - a) Notice of their intention to appeal;
 - b) Contact information of the Appellant;

- c) Name of the Respondent;
 - d) Detailed reason(s) for the appeal;
 - e) Grounds for the appeal;
 - f) All evidence that supports the reasons and grounds for an appeal;
 - g) The remedy or remedies requested, and
4. Any party wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the fourteen (14) day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to the requirement of Section 6. The decision to allow, or not allow an appeal outside the 14-day period will be at the sole discretion of the BA board and may not be appealed.

Grounds for Appeal

5. Not every decision may be appealed. Decisions may only be appealed, and appeals may only be heard, on procedural grounds. Procedural grounds are strictly limited to the Respondent:
- a) Making a decision for which it did not have authority or jurisdiction as set out in the Respondent's governing documents;
 - b) Failing to follow procedures as laid out in the bylaws or policies of BA; and/or
 - c) Making a decision that was influenced by bias, where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the decision-maker is unable to consider other views or that the decision was influenced by factors unrelated to the substance or merits of the decision.
6. The Appellant will bear the onus of proof in the appeal, and thus must be able to demonstrate, on a balance of probabilities, that the Respondent has made a procedural error as described in Section 8.

Case Management

7. BA board of directors will oversee the management and administration of appeals submitted in accordance with this Policy. The BA board has an overall responsibility to ensure procedural fairness is respected at all times in this Policy, and to implement this Policy in a timely manner. BA board will:
- a) Determine if appeals lie within the jurisdiction of this Policy;
 - b) Determine if appeals are brought in a timely manner;
 - c) Determine if appeals are brought on permissible grounds;
 - d) Appoint the tribunal to hear appeals;
 - e) Determine the format of the appeal hearing;
 - f) Coordinate all administrative and procedural aspects of the appeal;
 - g) Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the tribunal as required; and
 - h) Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely appeal proceeding.

Screening of Appeal

8. Upon receipt of the notice and grounds of an appeal the BA board will review the appeal and will decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for an appeal. If the BA board is satisfied that there are not sufficient grounds for an appeal, the parties will be notified in writing, stating

reasons. If the BA board is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal, then a hearing will take place. This decision may not be appealed.

Appeals Panel

9. If the BA board is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal, the BA board will establish an Appeals Panel of at least three persons to hear and decide an appeal and report to the BA board.

Procedure for the Hearing

10. The Appeals Panel will determine the format of the hearing, which may involve an oral hearing in person, an oral hearing by telephone, a hearing based on written submissions or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:
 - a) The hearing will be held within the appropriate timeline determined by the BA board.
 - b) The parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time and place of the hearing.
 - c) Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Panel consider will be provided to all parties in advance of the hearing in accordance with the appropriate timeline.
 - d) Both parties may be accompanied by a representative or adviser, including legal counsel.
 - e) The Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing.
 - f) If a decision in the appeal may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to an appeal in their own right under this Policy, that party will become a party to the appeal in question and will be bound by its outcome.
 - g) In the situation where the hearing is conducted by a Panel consisting of three persons, a quorum will be all three and decisions will be by majority vote.

Appeal Decision

11. Within fourteen (14) days of concluding the appeal, the Panel will issue its written decision, with reasons. In making its decision, the Panel will have no greater authority than that of the original decision-maker. The Panel may decide to:
 - a) Reject the appeal and confirm the decision being appealed; or
 - b) Uphold the appeal and refer the matter back to the initial decision-maker for a new decision; or
 - c) Uphold the appeal and vary the decision but only where it is found that an error occurred, and such an error cannot be corrected by the original decision-maker for reason of lack of clear procedure, lack of time, or lack of neutrality.
12. The decision will be considered a matter of public record. A copy of this decision will be provided to the parties and to BA. Where time is of the essence, the Panel may issue a verbal decision or a summary written decision, with reasons to follow, provided the written decision with reasons is rendered with the appropriate timelines.

Confidentiality

13. The appeal process is confidential involving only the parties, the BA board and the Panel. Once initiated and until a written decision is released, none of the parties or the Panel will disclose confidential information relating to the appeal to any person not involved in the proceedings.

Final and Binding Decision

14. The decision of the Panel will be binding on the parties and on all BA Members.
15. No action or legal proceeding will be commenced against BA or its members in respect of a dispute, unless BA has refused or failed to abide by the provisions for appeal as set out in the BA policies.