

# ARGYLL COMMUNITY LEAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT

DRAFT #4 FOR REVIEW

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## Introduction

The Argyll Community League Code of Conduct outlines the principles and standards for both group and individual behavior expected from all members of Argyll Community League, Executive Board, as well Committee Members. Committee Chair(s) are automatically members of Community League Executive Board.

This Code of Conduct aims to foster a positive, inclusive, and respectful environment; ensuring all activities are conducted in a manner which reflects our shared values of community, respect, and integrity. It is meant to protect both a complainant and subject(s) of a complaint through a series of defined steps towards seeking resolution.

The Argyll Community League will be referenced as “Argyll” and/or “Community League.” The Executive Board and Committee Members will be referenced as “Members.”

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## Principles

1. **Respect:** Treat all individuals with dignity and respect, regardless of their background, opinion, or contribution.
2. **Integrity:** Act honestly and ethically in all interactions and decisions.
3. **Inclusiveness:** Promote a welcoming environment where everyone is welcome, valued, and included equally.
4. **Collaboration:** Work cooperatively with other members while respecting differing viewpoints and experience.
5. **Responsibility:** Take responsibility for your actions and provide honest, accurate and defensible information with consideration for their impact on others.
6. **Confidentiality:** Ensure your best effort to protect the privacy of all member information and maintain confidentiality for all member contributions to the Community League.

## **Standards of Behaviour**

### **1. Communication:**

- Engage in open, honest, accurate and respectful communication.
- Listen actively and considerately to others.
- Avoid derogatory, offensive or discriminatory language.
- Refrain from actively promoting misinformation.

### **2. Participation:**

- Contribute actively and constructively to meetings, events, and activities.
- Support the Community League's stated goals and local initiatives.
- Fulfill any commitments or roles to the best of your ability.

### **3. Conflict of Interest:**

- Disclose any potential conflicts of interest promptly as an obligation of acting on behalf of the League.
- Avoid participating in Community League decisions where there is a personal financial interest.

### **4. Respect for Property:**

- Use Community League resources responsibly and sustainably.
- Respect and protect the property and belongings of others.

### **5. Respect for Individuals as volunteers:**

- Consideration for family responsibilities and personal priorities.
- Support others as you would expect to be supported.
- Follow through on personal commitments to the league.

### **6. Safety at community and public events:**

- Follow all safety guidelines and protocols as communicated by the Community League.
- Report any hazards, or observed unsafe conditions promptly, regarding any Community League activity, event and programme.
- Follow posted emergency directions or safety requirements in the facility.

## Dispute Resolution Guide

### Introduction

Disputes and disagreements may arise within any organization. This guide provides a structured approach to resolving conflict in a fair and efficient manner; ensuring the continued harmony and productivity of the Community League and its Members.

The Dispute may be between members of the Community League and/or former Members who have served the Community League within the past 12 months. Disputes occurring prior to 12 months will not be considered by the League for resolution and should be resolved separately from the regular business of the Community League. Disputes or concerns should be brought to any member of the Executive Board who are obligated to begin the resolution process on behalf of the complainant(s).

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### Principles of Dispute Resolution

- 1. Confidentiality:** All dispute resolution proceedings will be conducted with the utmost confidentiality to protect the privacy of the involved parties.
- 2. Impartiality:** The process will be fair and unbiased, with all parties given an equal opportunity to present their views.
- 3. Timeliness:** Disputes will be addressed promptly to prevent escalation and minimize disruption to the League's activities.
- 4. Documentation:** All formal complaints and resolutions will be documented and stored securely for reference and accountability.

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### Step-by-Step Dispute Resolution Process

As is described in the Tripartite Agreement with the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL), and the Argyll Community League (ACL), all elected members of the League are protected from any legal action or liability regarding this mediation process and any participants in any Special General Meetings cannot be held liable for their efforts to seek resolution.

#### **1. Verbal Complaint Submission:**

- A verbal complaint regarding a member's conduct may be communicated to any member of the Executive Board who will review the nature of the complaint and decide if further action is necessary.

- The Board member may decide to engage directly, regarding the conduct, and seek an informal resolution between the two parties.
- Encourage members to address issues directly with the involved parties before submitting a formal complaint. Often, a simple and respectful conversation can resolve misunderstandings.
- If an informal resolution cannot be reached a decision regarding formal resolution process will be recommended by the board member by requesting a special meeting of the Executive to address the issue.

**2. Written Complaint Submission:** When necessary a complaint may need to be submitted in written form to properly communicate the nature of the conduct.

- The Executive Board will review any written complaint at a special meeting, gather additional information – if necessary, and offer a resolution to all parties within 14 days of their consultation meeting.

**3. Informal Resolution:** This is the first opportunity for a person to correct their behaviour and avoid subsequent action.

- Any verbal or written report(s) of unacceptable conduct outlined in the principles and the Standards of Behaviour stated above may be settled to the satisfaction of all parties through an informal meeting of all members involved where a designated representative of the Executive Board may attempt agreement with parties to find a satisfactory solution to the behaviour(s) and an acceptable remedy for past behaviour.

**4. Formal Resolution:** If an informal resolution does not resolve the issue, the aggrieved party may submit a written complaint to the Executive Board.

- The complaint should include details of the issue, steps taken to resolve it informally, and the desired outcome. This may include dates and times, other members in attendance, or any written documents to support their complaint.
- The executive board may require a Special Meeting of the Board to deal with the issue.
- The Special Executive Meeting may assign a board member to take their recommendation(s) back to the parties involved.
- The Executive Board member who originally heard the complaint(s) and sought informal resolution will then report to the Board their efforts and recommendation for further action.

**5. Special General Meeting:** If any offered resolution by the Executive Board is not acceptable by all parties, the complainant(s) may request a Special General Meeting of the League be held to discuss the issue with the membership, and further seek resolution.

- If Board recommendation(s) are not accepted by either party to the complaint, the Executive Board may convene a Special General Meeting and invite League members to participate in making a Final Decision based on information provided at a Special General Meeting.
- ACL Bylaw 2.03 (b) states: *a Special Meeting may be called if requested by any two (2) Community Members, provided they request the President to call such meeting, and have stated the business to be brought before the meeting.*

**6. Final Decision:** The Executive Board will report to all parties to the dispute after the membership makes a decision regarding remedy at a Special General Meeting.

- Participants attending the Special General Meeting will be instructed on their role in this process of finding resolution to the dispute. A quorum of 4 members and the Executive Board is required, but ratification at the next AGM will not be required.
- The meeting will follow a prescribed agenda and will be given background information (verbally) on steps taken prior to the meeting. Information may also be shared from documents submitted at each stage of the process along with the recommendations offered prior to the special meeting.
- All parties to the dispute will be given an opportunity to present their views on the conduct in question and will be available to answer questions from the membership.
- This Final Decision by the membership will be binding on all parties to the dispute and will be immediately communicated to all parties at the conclusion of the Special General Meeting.
- The membership's Final Decision may not be challenged by the concerned parties.
- Action to remedy the complaint will be taken immediately.

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## Appropriate Action

This section of the Code of Conduct is meant to provide possible remedies and describe levels of action which would be most appropriate in response to the perceived harm, or severity of the conduct in question. This is not mean to be a measuring scale or a strict list of outcomes, but rather a guide to what remedies an Executive Board, or full membership might take into consideration while deliberating what reasonable action might be taken or how severed the consequences of the misconduct in question.

The severity of misconduct may dictate what options to drawn from in order to satisfy the membership. A Formal Resolution may contain any combination of the following remedies. These are offered as a helpful list and is not a comprehensive set of rules.

**NOTE:**

*This is a starting point for thinking about, and debating reasonable consequences for misconduct should the membership be required to take up a Final Decision on behalf of the League. The league membership may offer other actions not listed.*

**Abusive behaviour, assault or misconduct involving a minor:** The community league is required, by law, to report Abuse to public authorities and is prevented from deal with them internally. These include Physical, Verbal or Sexual Abuse as well as persistent Harassment. *See definitions of abuse below.* No action is required from the League.

**Disruptive behaviour at meetings, gatherings, or public events:** Options include formal apology to the participants at the earliest opportunity (next group meeting), the person(s) prevented from participating or attending any gathering or public events and may include dismissal from League service.

**Harm to the organization:** Removal of the member in question from all responsibilities, authority, and benefits of membership.

**Harm to a person or group:** Options include revoking membership for a fixed period or outright ban from participation in events, meetings, or celebrations.

**Misrepresenting the organization to another group:** The person will be asked to contact the group(s) involved and provide proof of an apology for misrepresenting the League, or written evidence the group(s) involved have been informed of the misrepresentation and it has been corrected.

**Mishandling funds:** (By employing deceptive practices to acquire, or redirect funding) The person will reimburse the League for any funds misdirected, as well as report to any funding agency the nature of the misrepresentation, as well as providing evidence this action was taken. Options also include meeting with the funding agency to have them explain the misconduct directly.

**Divulging confidential information:** If a member fails to protect the identity and personal information of any other member or group they will be required to make whole those affected by the breach of trust and prepare a formal apology in person or in written form.

**Damage to facilities:** Temporarily Revoking of membership (for two years) and no access to the facility without supervision following the complaint resolution.

**Fraud, Criminal acts, or Slanderous remarks:** Immediate removal from any position of authority and revocation of membership permanently followed by reporting the activity to the police.

**NOTE:**

*Those who report misconduct, abuse, or harassment will not be retaliated against for filing a complaint and/or assisting in a complaint or investigation process.*

## Conclusion

The Argyll Community League is committed to maintaining a positive and cooperative environment. By adhering to this Code of Conduct, and the Dispute Resolution Guide, members can contribute to a respectful, productive, and harmonious community.

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## DEFINITIONS of Abuse and Harassment

- **Physical Abuse** is defined as but not limited to the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling or the abusive use of restraints.
- **Sexual Abuse** is defined as but not limited to any unwanted touching, fondling, observations for sexual gratification, any penetration or attempted penetration with a penis, digital or object of the vagina or anus, verbal or written propositions or innuendos, exhibitionism or exploitation for profit including pornography.
- **Verbal Abuse** is defined as but not limited to humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.
- **Harassment** is defined as but not limited to any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates, including gender-based harassment. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, display of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.