



## GEORGIA YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

### Request for Hearing and Appeal Process

It is the Georgia Youth Football League's (GYFL's) policy to provide a safe environment for our youth to enjoy playing football and cheerleading. Coaches who fail to follow GYFL's conference rules can adversely affect GYFL's football and cheerleading program as a whole. For the safety and well-being of our youth while participating in a football game or cheerleading event sanctioned by GYFL, GYFL has established these policies that address instances when a coach's conduct may adversely affect others involved with the GYFL football and cheerleading programs. Additionally, the policy covers the terms and the process for filing a formal appeal within GYFL.

The following identifies GYFL's policies on coach's misconduct which are more specifically defined in GYFL's Conference Rules, GYFL's Cheerleader's Rules, and the Coaches Code of Conduct.

**Falsifying Records** – No coach shall misrepresent or falsify any record or document required for a player's or cheerleader's certification.

**Abuse of Game Official** – No coach shall verbally or physically abuse a game official.

**Scouting** – No coach or a designate shall scout or attend the practice of another member team without the expressed consent of that team's coach.

**Recruiting** – No coach or a designate shall engage in recruiting players from another GYFL league member's team.

**Use of Alcohol, Drugs & Tobacco Products** – No coach shall be under the influence of alcohol or dangerous drugs or smoke or use any form of tobacco while on the field of play during games, scrimmages or practices.

**Use of Illegal Player** – No coach shall attempt to certify, play or recruit any player that has been determined as ineligible for play in GYFL

Any coach found to be guilty of conducting detrimental to GYFL's games or events is subject to disciplinary action that includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal warning by official, or head of league organization
- Written warning
- Game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file
- Game(s) forfeiture with written documentation of incident kept on file
- Season(s) suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file
- Fines with written documentation of incident kept on file

If the disciplinary action imposed upon a coach for violating any rules described herein or in GYFL's Conference Rules, GYFL's Cheerleader's Rules, or the Coaches Code of Conduct, results in a suspension of any kind, that coach may appeal to the Commissioner for a hearing and such hearing will be heard by GYFL's Appeal Committee (GAC).

The guidelines for an appeal are detailed below:

#### **Request for Hearing**

A hearing to appeal against a decision to suspend a coach will be held only after receipt of a written Request for Hearing is filed with the Commissioner. Requests for Hearing must contain the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) requesting the hearing (requester).

Persons submitting a Request for Hearing must include a statement of the reason(s) why they believe the suspension is inappropriate.

Requests for Hearing must be filed within two (2) business days after a coach has received written notice of suspension and will be deemed filed when received by the Commissioner.

The Commissioner will set the time and place of the hearing when the request is filed (received) and will notify the Requester. The time of the hearing will be within 10 business days after the time the Request for Hearing was filed (excluding holidays).

If the Requester fails to appear at the hearing, and gives no prior notice, the Commissioner may determine that the suspension is appropriate and make further findings, as appropriate.

Hearings may be postponed or rescheduled only upon written request to the Commissioner and for good cause.

The issues to be decided at the hearing are limited to those set forth in the notice of suspension and the Request for Hearing.

Evidence commonly relied upon by reasonable, prudent persons will be heard and considered. Specifically, this includes statements (oral and written), documents and copies of documents, official and business reports, and records not certified as such.

Irrelevant, immaterial, redundant or unduly repetitious evidence will be excluded.

A record of the hearing (electronic or otherwise) will be kept, as determined by the Commissioner

### **Five-Judge Panel**

Appeals will be decided by a five-member committee, GYFL's Appeal Committee (**GAC**) working together. The committee will include the Co-commissioner, as chairperson, and four other members from selected from the general membership of which at least one (1) shall come from the cheerleading representation. Members of the committee will play no role in determining who will sit on the committee or in the assignment of the hearings. Selection of the committee members and the assignment of the hearings to the committee are separate functions that will be performed by the Commissioner.

Additionally, committee members will not participate in cases in which their participation would constitute a conflict of interest or create an appearance of impropriety. In such instances, the committee member will exclude himself or herself from the hearing. When such instances occur, the Commissioner will appoint an alternate committee member, to serve temporarily, for that particular hearing.

The requester will file a "Request for Hearing" with the Commissioner, who will create a docket for the hearing and present to the **GAC**. In the Request for Hearing, the requester must present written argument seeking to persuade **GAC** that the Disciplinary Committee committed a substantial error, and that the Disciplinary Committee's decision should therefore be reversed.

**GAC**'s decision may be based on the information submitted in the Request for Hearing, or it may be an oral argument. The oral argument shall be a structured discussion in which the requester will be given fifteen (15) minutes to present its oral argument on the principles in the dispute and decision of the Disciplinary Committee. Likewise, the Disciplinary Committee will be given fifteen (15) minutes to present an oral argument for its decision. However, committee members may interrupt to ask any questions. Oral arguments shall be opened to the general GYFL membership.

Shortly after reviewing the Request for Hearing or after oral argument, **GAC** will issue a decision, which shall be accompanied by an opinion explaining its rationale. A decision may be reached by a 5-0, 4-1, or 3-2 vote. The decision will take into account and apply to any relevant precedents or similar appeals already decided by the **GAC**.

### **Decisions**

All decisions will be in writing and become final. Decisions will be made at the conclusion of the hearing or as soon thereafter as a decision can be made. The Commissioner will notify the Requester in writing of the decision and the reasons for the decision.