



# Longford Athletics Club

## ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

### DIGNITY AND RESPECT

#### *Equal Opportunities*

Longford AC is committed to policies and practices that provide equality of opportunity for all, protect the dignity of members and promote respect for others. All members are required to take personal and individual responsibility to comply with these policies and behave in a non-discriminatory way and not to participate in any acts of inappropriate behaviour, harassment or bullying.

Longford AC is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in the club. The Club is committed to promoting a good and harmonious environment where every member is treated with respect and dignity, and in which no member feels threatened or intimidated.

Any member with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the club are requested to bring these issues to the attention of the Club Chairman or any other member of the Executive Committee for resolution.

Members can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. All complaints will be treated confidentially as far as practicable.

All members are required to take personal and individual responsibility to comply with this and related policies, and behave in a non-discriminatory way and any member contravening this policy and unlawfully discriminating against another member, will render himself or herself liable for disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the club.

### ***Dignity and Respect***

The club is committed to implementing and promoting measures to protect the dignity of members and to encourage respect for others. This is achieved by creating an environment free from harassment, bullying, racism and disrespectful behaviour, by dealing effectively with any complaints of such conduct, and also by welcoming diversity and promoting equality.

This policy is applicable to all members of the club who are obliged to be aware of the effect their own behaviour may have on others. It extends to club related events including training, conferences and social events.

### ***Harassment and Sexual Harassment***

Any form of harassment or sexual harassment is prohibited by the club. Harassment is defined as any act or conduct that is unwelcome and unacceptable, and could be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating. It can be a one-off event or persistent and repeated behaviour. It can be:

- Non-verbal
- Looks, gestures, isolation, exclusion, refusing to listen to a point of view
- Verbal
- Spoken words, shouting, unfair and excessive criticism
- Physical
- Abusive behaviour, production, displaying or circulation of words, pictures, materials

Sexual harassment is defined as any act of a sexual nature, or with a sexual dimension, that is unwelcome, unsolicited, unwanted or unacceptable and is reasonably regarded as intimidating. A single incident may constitute sexual harassment. It can be:

- Non-verbal
- Looks, gestures, whistling, suggestive symbols, pictures
- Verbal
- Advances, propositions, suggestions, jokes, comments, innuendo
- Physical
- Groping, kissing, fondling, unnecessary touching, assault or rape
- Sex-based conduct
- Conduct that denigrates, ridicules or is intimidatory or physically abusive of the member because of his or her sex

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

### ***Bullying***

Any form of bullying is prohibited by the club. Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as a once off, is not considered to be bullying.

Bullying is distinct from conflicting views and interpersonal difficulties, which should be raised with the appropriate manager in order to have any grievances or difficulties resolved.

Bullying can take the following forms:

- Physical Contact
- Verbal abuse
- Implied threats
- Jokes, offensive language, gossip, slander, offensive songs.
- Posters, photocopied cartoons, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting and emblems or non co-operation or exclusion from social activities.
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking
- Repeated impossible deadlines or impossible tasks.
- Repeated unreasonable assignments to duties, which are obviously unfavourable to one individual.
- Vandalism of personal property.

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

### ***Rights and Responsibilities***

Everyone in the club has the responsibility to prevent harassment, sexual harassment or bullying and to report any instances that they are party or witness to. There is a particular responsibility on coaches to ensure the prevention of incidents of harassment and to take action should any incidents be brought to their attention.

Members who feel that they are being harassed in any way in the club are encouraged to approach a member of the executive. All complaints of harassment will be taken seriously, and are to be held in strict confidence as far as is reasonably practicable, and will be investigated promptly and in an impartial manner. Only if these instances are reported can the club take action to correct the situation. Any member is free to make a complaint. He/she will not be victimised for making a complaint.

However, if a complaint is found to be unwarranted or malicious, disciplinary action may be taken. The person who is alleged to have done the harassing or bullying has rights. He/she is entitled to representation, a fair and impartial hearing, and the right

to challenge the claim. An allegation of harassment or bullying remains an allegation until an investigation is completed. Disciplinary action will be taken against a member if, after an investigation, the allegation is upheld. Penalties are in accordance with the normal disciplinary procedure set out by the Athletics Association of Ireland.

Coaches are required to act if they suspect any form of harassment or bullying, even if no complaint has been made.

This document was approved by the AGM of Longford Athletic Club on

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Children's Officer

Reviewed and ratified 15 Mar 2022