

GENERAL INFORMATION*

Lead Area:	RUGBY OPERATIONS
Lead Procedure Title:	SEND OFF POLICY
Date last modified:	6 AUGUST 2018

1. OVERVIEW

This policy sets out the procedures for disciplinary matters, to provide a consistent approach to disciplinary proceedings and ensure a fair and safe playing environment for all participants.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy sets out the procedures for dealing with the following matters for which SA Rugby has jurisdiction:

- a. when a Player is sent off the playing enclosure (**Red Card**); and
- b. when a Player has been temporarily suspended (**Yellow Card**).

This policy has the effect of a Rule under the Competition Rules issued by SA Rugby and terms used in this policy shall be as defined and interpreted in the Competition Rules.

For the avoidance of doubt in this policy, a “Season” includes the minor rounds and finals of a competition.

3. PROCEDURES – YELLOW CARDS

a. Match Day

- i. If a Player is issued a Yellow Card by a Referee during a Match in **Seniors to U16s** the Player must sit on allocated chair on half way for a period of ten (10) minutes, and must not re-enter the field of play until expressly permitted to do so by the Referee. Should the 10 minutes go over half time the carded player may join his team during the half time chat, but must return to the chair at half way when play resumes. The ten (10) minute suspension excludes half time and any injury time.
- ii. If a Player is issued a Yellow Card by a Referee during a Match in **U14 and below** the Player must sit within their team box for a period of five (5) minutes, and must not re-enter the field of play until expressly permitted to do so by the Referee. The five (5) minute suspension includes injury time. **Regardless of whether 5 minutes is up or not at half time, player will be permitted to take the field after half time**
- iii. **U12 variation** – When a player is red or yellow carded the team may put a replacement player on for the 5 minutes or the duration of the game if red card.
- iv. The Referee or their nominated delegate will keep and be the sole arbiter of the time for which a suspended Player is off the field.
- v. All Yellow Cards must be recorded on the team sheet prior to signing by the Referee. Any failure to do so will leave the Player and the Club liable to penalty at the Union’s discretion.

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- vi. All Yellow Cards from a Match are to be recorded on Rugbylink and the basis for those Yellow Cards (e.g. repeated team infringement or foul play)
Rugbylink navigation: Competition Participation > Tasks > Enter Player Statistics > Player Incidents Tab

b. Yellow Card Challenge

- i. A Player who receives a Yellow Card may give written notice challenging that Yellow Card within 48 hours of completion of the Match in which the Yellow Card arose. The notice must detail the basis of the challenge.
- ii. The Player's notice will be recorded by SA Rugby and a report obtained from the Referee, both to be considered by the Rugby Judiciary if and when the Player is later involved in a hearing about multiple Yellow Cards.

c. Multiple Yellow Cards

- i. If a Player receives **two Yellow Cards in a Match** and is sent off as a result (i.e. red card) they will automatically miss their next scheduled Match, unless they challenge one or more of those Yellow Cards [*paragraph 3(b)*] in which case a hearing will be held as per paragraph 3(c)(iv). Those Yellow Cards will be counted and recorded as one Red Card, not as two Yellow Cards for the purposes of the following subclauses.
- ii. If a Player receives **three Yellow Cards in a Season** they automatically miss the next scheduled Match, unless they challenged one or more of those Yellow Cards [*paragraph 3(b)*], in which case a hearing will be held.
- iii. Once a Player has served their suspension for multiple Yellow Cards, the Player's accumulated Yellow Card tally for that Season is reset to zero. If the Player receives a further **two Yellow Cards in that Season** they automatically miss the next scheduled Match and a hearing will be held to determine any additional suspension.
- iv. Once a Player has served their further suspension for multiple Yellow Cards in the same season, the Player's accumulated Yellow Card tally for that Season is reset again to zero. However if the Player receives any further **Yellow Card in that Season** they automatically miss the next scheduled Match for each and every such yellow card and a hearing will be held in every such case to determine additional suspensions.

d. Hearings

- i. A Player shall appear before the Rugby Judiciary if:
 - the Player received two Yellow Cards in a particular Match and was sent off as a result and gave notice in accordance with paragraph 3(b) with respect to one or more of those Yellow Cards; or
 - the Player has received multiple Yellow Cards in any one particular Season and is required to attend a hearing as result.

At the same time that the Player is notified of their hearing, the Player shall be sent copies of the Referee's Report(s). The purpose of the hearing will be to consider the circumstances in which each Yellow Card was imposed and determine whether any

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further penalty should be imposed by reason of persistent Foul Play. The Rugby Judiciary may at its discretion suspend a player from playing in the SA Rugby competition as a result of repeated Yellow Cards for such period as it sees fit.

4. PROCEDURES – RED CARDS

a. Send Off

- i. If a Player is sent off by a Referee during a Match (i.e. red card) they must leave the field of play and take no further part in that Match.
- ii. A Player who has received a Red Card is suspended from playing in any Match or taking part in any on-field activity (e.g. coaching, managing, running water) until their case has been heard by the Rugby Judiciary.

b. Pre-Hearing

- i. The Referee shall lodge the Referee's Report with SA Rugby by 10:00am on the first business day following the Match.
- ii. After receiving the Referee's Report the Chair of SA Rugby Judiciary will consider the incident and if they assess it to be at the lower end entry point of a two week penalty or less under World Rugby Regulation 17, they may offer an early guilty plea to the Player.
- iii. The Referee's Report, and the offer of an early guilty plea if applicable, will be sent to the Player's by email via their Club Secretary as soon as practicable following the Match (usually on the Tuesday morning).
- iv. If offered an early guilty plea the Player must advise SA Rugby by return email as to whether they wish to accept it, by no later than 8.00pm on the Tuesday following the incident.
- v. If the Player is not offered or does not accept an early guilty plea, the Player must appear before the Rugby Judiciary at 6.30pm on the Wednesday following the incident at the offices of SA Rugby.
- vi. If the Player does not attend the Judiciary hearing and did not give notice by midday on the Wednesday, the Player's Club will be fined \$100

c. Video Footage

- i. If a Player intends to plead not guilty, any existing video footage within the control of the Player's Club must be presented to SA Rugby by midday on the day of the hearing. If video footage will not be provided, the President or Secretary of the Player's Club must write to SA Rugby by midday on the day of the hearing promising that such footage was not taken. Failure to comply with this obligation may result in the Rugby Judiciary assuming that incriminatory video evidence has been deliberately withheld or destroyed.
- ii. SA Rugby will ensure that any video footage within the control of SA Rugby (whether taken formally or informally, and for example as may have been taken for the Referees) is available for the Rugby Judiciary at the hearing.

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d. Hearing & Decision

- i. The Rugby Judiciary will hear the case and, if applicable, impose penalties in the manner prescribed by World Rugby Regulation 17 and the Australian Rugby Union's National Disciplinary Guidelines.
- ii. In accordance with World Rugby Regulation 17 and the Australian Rugby Union's National Disciplinary Guidelines, the decision of the Referee
- iii. The findings of the Rugby Judiciary, including any penalty, will be
 - Provided to the Player in writing;
 - Recorded by SA Rugby and kept in a permanent register for future reference by the Rugby Judiciary; and
 - May be made public at the discretion of SA Rugby
- iv. Any appeal against a decision of the Rugby Judiciary must be done in accordance with SA 7 – Appeals Procedure

5. OTHER PROCEDURES

- a. If a Player refuses to comply with the directions of a Referee when the Player is ordered off the field:
 - i. the Match may at the Referee's discretion be immediately awarded to the opposing Team as if the Match had been forfeited by the Team for which the refusing Player was playing; and
 - ii. the Player in question will be suspended from playing any Match until their citation has been decided by the Judicial Committee at which time their refusal to leave the field of play will also be considered and taken into account and may be considered by the Rugby Judiciary as a separate citation.
- b. If the Red Cards issued to the Players of a Club in a particular Season exceeds the number of teams entered into the Competition by that Club (with the exception of U10's and below), the President of that Club will be required to present to representatives of SA Rugby as to the Club's poor disciplinary record and what steps have been taken by the Club to address the problem. The Club may be subjected to a fine or loss of competition points for any further Red Cards received in that Season.
- c. Failure by SA Rugby and/or a Referee to comply with timeframes or other administrative matters does not invalidate the proceedings against the Player.

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