COMPLAINTS POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

The Mount Eliza Soccer Club (the **"Club"**) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all members, visitors, and participants. This Complaints Policy is designed to provide an outline of the complaints process at the Club so that all members, volunteers, staff, parents and Committee of the Club are informed how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our Club and provide guidance on how complaints are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, staff, visitors, and participants involved with the club including but not limited to players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators.

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, players or members of our club and applies to all matters relating to our club. In some limited instances, we may need to refer the complainant to higher authority where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions.

POLICY:

The Club welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our members and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognize that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection. We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our Club. We understand that it is in the best interests of players that there is a trusting relationship between all stakeholders at our club.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- raise and discuss issues in a courteous and respectful manner
- acknowledge that the goal is to achieve an outcome that is in the best interests and acceptable to all parties
- act in good faith and respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate
- recognize that all parties, including the broader club, have rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- recognize that the Club may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Preparation to raise a concern or complaint with the Club encourages parents, carers or members of the club who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise
- think about how the matter could be resolved
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Club, Football Victoria and/or Football Federation Australia.

Complaints Process

The Club is always happy to discuss with parents / carers and Club members any concerns that they may have. For matters involving a particular child / member or an issue of everyday Club operation, parents can make an appointment to see the relevant committee, detailing the reason for the appointment.

Where possible, Club volunteers / staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed. To discuss issues involving Club policy, operations beyond the field or concerns about coaches, parents or Club members may wish to make an appointment with the President or the appointed complaints officer of the Club.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our Club will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together.

The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received**: Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the Club Secretary or President, to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.

2. **Information gathering**: Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Complaints officer or President or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.

3. **Response**: Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Complaints officer / President to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties.

If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action about it. In some circumstances, the President may determine that a resolution meeting may not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.

4. **Timelines:** The Club will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, the Club may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised.

In situations where further time is required, the Club will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Resolution
Where appropriate, the issue or complaint may be solved by the Club

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- offering the opportunity for player counselling or other support
- other actions consistent with club values that are intended to support the player, parent and Club relationship, engagement, and participation in the club.
- In some circumstances, the Club may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

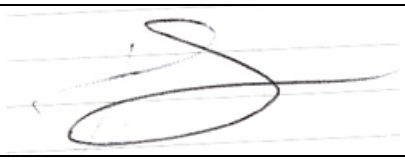
Escalation: If a parent or Club member is not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved by the Club, or if their complaint is about the President, then the complaint should be referred to the Football Victoria Executive for Clubs and community on (03) 9474 1800.

Consequences of Violation:
Violations of this Complaints Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion from the club, depending on the severity of the offense and at the discretion of club management.

Reporting Violations:
Any member, volunteer, staff, or participant who witnesses or experiences a violation of this policy is encouraged to report it to either the MESC Committee, Football Committee or designated authorities promptly.

Review and Updates:
This Complaints Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Amendments or updates may be made as necessary, with notice provided to all relevant parties.

Acknowledgement:
By participating at the club, all members, volunteers, staff, visitors, and participants agree to abide by this Complaints Policy and acknowledge their responsibility to uphold its guidelines.

COMPLAINTS POLICY		Approval Date:	01 / 05 / 2026
		Review Date:	01 / 05 / 2028
		Version No:	2026 C 1.0
President Signature:		Name:	Fernando Cortes
Operations Manager Signature:		Name:	Marcus Benbow