

SECTION	Stadium Safety
POLICY	Spectator Suspension and Banning Policy
DATE OF CREATION	April 25, 2024
VERSION	1
DATE OF ISSUE	April 25, 2024
REVIEW DATE	July 1, 2024

1. Introduction

Club Doncaster (*Doncaster Rovers Football Club, Doncaster Rugby League Football Club, Doncaster Rovers Belles Football Club, Club Doncaster Foundation, Club Doncaster Sports Park*) Spectator Suspension and Banning Policy is compliant with the requirements and principles of The Equality Act 2010.

This policy must be applied fairly, proportionately, equally, and consistently to all persons, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity/paternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other unjustifiable grounds.

It also complements and runs in conjunction with, information sharing agreements held between Club Doncaster and South Yorkshire Police, Football Authorities and other Football Clubs and relevant venues.

2. Purpose

This policy intends to maximise safety at events/matchdays involving any professional sports teams under the Club Doncaster umbrella, improve and protect the match experience of people attending such fixtures. It will also maintain and improve the reputation of Club Doncaster, safeguarding the commercial interests of the business.

Irrespective of any prohibition on attending matches at the Eco-Power Stadium imposed by a court of law, Club Doncaster requires a separate and transparent framework within which will impose realistic, consistent and proportionate suspensions or bans on individuals attending such matches or other events organised by Club Doncaster to provide the above safeguards.

The process of supporter suspension or banning will address the following:

- Misconduct deemed to have compromised safety or good order within the Eco-Power Stadium.
- Conduct that presents a future risk to safety, or moral demeanour being compromised at fixtures at the Eco-Power Stadium.
- Actions found to be in breach of the Ground Regulations or the Terms of Conditions of Entry applicable to the Eco-Power Stadium.
- Conduct that is deemed contrary to the core values of Club Doncaster.

3. Football procedures

A 'Football Banning Order' (FBO) can be used by a court of law to ban a certain individual from attending football matches both home and abroad for a period of between three and 10 years. Additional and more precise conditions can also be imposed on a case-by-case basis. The authority for such an order is provided by The Football (Offences and Disorder) Act 1991.

However, following a breach of Ground Regulations or the Terms and Conditions of Entry, and notwithstanding any ongoing proposed pursuit of an FBO police, Club Doncaster reserves the right to suspend or ban specific individuals from attending football matches or events and activities involving, hosted or organised by Club Doncaster.

In addition to being suspended or banned from first-team matches at the Eco-Power Stadium, such a suspension or ban may also prohibit:

- Admission to, or presence at, all levels of Club Doncaster representative matches, both home and away.
- Attendance at, or upon, property either owned by or loaned/leased to Club Doncaster, including training grounds, retail and ticket outlets.
- Involvement in any transport activities organised by Club Doncaster.
- Attendance at any social functions organised by, or on behalf of Club Doncaster.

A suspension or ban will also include:

- Suspension or cancellation of any season membership card or other concessionary privileges.
- Suspension or cancellation of any match ticket purchasing account with the Box Office.

Any period of suspension or ban involving a season membership card will be imposed without recompense, in accordance with the terms and conditions of issue. In the event of such cancellation no refund will be paid in respect of any unexpired portion of the season membership card.

Whilst each case will be dealt with on its own merits, the implications and scope of any suspension or ban will be outlined in clear terms within correspondence with the individual concerned.

Should an incident involve any aggravating features such as, but not limited to, violent, threatening, dangerous, or discriminatory behaviour, or involve any activity that threatens the safety management operations, Club Doncaster reserves the right to increase the standard suspension or ban to reflect the seriousness of the circumstances.

4. Intervention process

Club Doncaster reserve the right to eject any person(s) from the stadium for failing to comply with the Ground Regulations, or whose presence within the stadium is, or could be construed as constituting a source of danger, nuisance, or annoyance to any other person.

Club Doncaster reserve the right to refuse admission, withdraw tickets or ban any person who, through their actions, behaviour, or opinion bring the club's name or reputation into dispute.

5. Banning process

On completion of the club's post-match/event investigation, anyone alleged to have breached Club Doncaster rules/regulations or behaviour falls below of Club Doncaster expectations, the supporter shall be informed by letter (other forms of communication are possible depending on circumstances) of such allegation. Their season membership card and ability to buy home and away tickets shall be suspended. Individuals will be informed of this within 14 days of the alleged incident being brought to the attention of the club's Head of Safety.

A letter will be sent by recorded mail, or if appropriate e-mail, informing the person of the decision to ban and offer the opportunity to appeal the decision. A copy of the decision letter will be kept by the club passed onto South Yorkshire Police for their records.

6. Appeal process

Should any person appeal against a suspension or ban, the following procedure must be complied with.

Appeals against a decision to ban must be made in writing to the club's Chief Operating Officer at Club Doncaster within 14 days of the date on the letter informing the individual of the decision. No appeals received after this period will be considered.

On receipt of an appeal, it will be allocated to the Chief Operating Officer who will review the decision and evidence that led to the decision being made. There will be no further grounds for appeal following the outcome of this section of the process.

All notes, evidence and correspondence relating to the investigation will be kept on record by the club in accordance with GDPR.

7. Appeal outcome

Possible outcomes of the appeal process could be, but are not limited to:

- The terms of the existing suspension or ban will stand;
- The terms of the existing suspension or ban will be reduced or amended;
- The existing suspension or ban will be rescinded.

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing to the appellant.

Any appeal against the final club decision should be made to the relevant football authority – Premier League, English Football League, National League or Football Association.

If having reverted to the relevant football authority, the appellant still feels aggrieved at the outcome they can resort to the Independent Football Ombudsman (IFO).

The IFO has been established by the three English football authorities to receive and adjudicate upon complaints, which have not been resolved at an earlier stage.

8. Returning to the Eco-Power Stadium after a ban

When a suspension or ban expires, the individual can write to the Head of Safety and request the ban to be reviewed. Confirmation of the ban being lifted would then be confirmed in writing.

At the conclusion of any period of suspension or ban, the subject will be required to enter into a new and separate Acceptable Behaviour Agreement for an additional period of up to 12 months.

In all applicable cases, this requirement will be contained within the original correspondence sent to the subject at the outset of the ban.

The Acceptable Behaviour Agreement must be signed by the subject before any prohibitions are finally lifted.

Once an Agreement is signed, all existing prohibitions will be lifted with immediate effect and confirmed to the subject in writing.

Any breach of an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement will be dealt with accordingly.