A guide to R9 for Affiliated Clubs

BOWLS ENGLAND

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What is R9?
R9 is Bowls England's framework for addressing complaints of misconduct. Formerly known as Regulation 9, this revised process has been significantly enhanced to improve ease of use for our members.

How do we know to follow R9?
Per our conditions of affiliation, R9 must be quoted within the Affiliated Club's governing documents such as Club Constitutions.

But our Constitution says we should follow our own process for misconduct complaints?
All Affiliated Clubs and County Associations must exclusively utilise R9 to address all complaints of misconduct against Members. No alternative processes for handling misconduct are permitted.

How does R9 work?
The R9 process involves a neutral 3rd party categorising complaints based on their nature and severity of impact. This categorisation guides the appropriate investigative pathway to ensure a just and proportionate decision, which may include a sanction.

Why is it important to follow R9?
R9 is a mandatory process that ensures fair and just resolution of misconduct complaints.

But our Committee is empowered to make these decisions without going through R9!
No sanctions, penalties, suspension or removal of membership can be implemented without having followed the provisions of R9 in full.

A guide to handling a complaint

A complaint of misconduct has been made at our Club, what do we do?

Following R9, the Complainant must have completed the 'Complaints Form' template and sent it on to the Club's Complaint Assessor who is likely to be the Club Chair or President if the Club does not have a Chair. In situations where it is not appropriate to send the complaint to the Chair or President; for the avoidance of doubt the Complaint Assessor should always be someone who does not have any conflict of interest regarding the complaint

Should the Committee be made aware of the complaint?

Discussions must not be had by any parties to ensure a fair review of the complaint. It is the Complaint Assessor's role to review the complaint and must not be influenced by other parties

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The Complaint was made by a non-member, does it need to be addressed?

Yes, R9 is the mechanism for making a complaint about a Bowls England Affiliated Member but the person making the complaint need not be a member.

As a Complaint Assessor I am worried the complaint relates to safeguarding, what should I do?

Please contact the Bowls England Safeguarding team to discuss the details of the complaint. The team will be able to provide next steps within the R9 prescribed timelines.

The importance of mental health & wellbeing

We understand that parties involved in a misconduct complaint investigations sometimes may experience personal challenges (as with any conflict resolution process), therefore, we have provided a list of external agencies that can offer guidance and support for well-being and mental health concerns.

It's important to remember R9 is focused on ensuring a fair and just resolution of misconduct complaints, and Bowls England are here to support from a procedural guidance point of view.

Samaritans

Speak to a Samaritan Volunteer in confidence without judgement.
08457 90 90 90
Samaritans.org

Together All

A safe, online community where people support each other anonymously to improve mental health and wellbeing.
togetherall.com

Mind

If you or someone you know if going through a difficult time, Mind can offer support.
0300 123 3393
mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/