

WARKWORTH BRIDGE CLUB INCORPORATED

Code of Conduct (incorporating the complaints and appeals processes)

Last review date: 7 March 2026

Last changed date: 7 March 2026

Background

The club constitution clause 4 states the **primary purposes of the club** are to:

- provide a place where Bridge players can meet to enjoy the game of Contract Bridge in all or any of its forms whatsoever, in a genial and friendly atmosphere; and
- provide training and competitions through affiliation to New Zealand Bridge Incorporated (NZ Bridge).

Further, clause 38 states play will be conducted under The Laws of Duplicate Bridge 2017 inclusive of any future changes (“Laws”). The Director, who applies and is bound by these Laws and is the club’s official representative at all sessions, has various duties and powers including to:

- maintain discipline and to ensure the orderly progress of the game; and
- refer any matter to the Recorder or the Committee.

In line with good practice promoted by NZ Bridge, the club has appointed a Recorder whose role and responsibilities are detailed in Appendix 1. The Recorder registers complaints and incidents that do not require immediate Director rulings but may need attention, with a view to resolving the issue on an informal basis. It is very important that unacceptable behaviour be reported to the Recorder. A quiet word in the ear of the perpetrator may be all that is required to prevent further incidents and make the game of bridge more enjoyable for everyone.

The club expects everyone to play an active role in ensuring the club environment is safe and welcoming. The club encourages people to speak up if they experience or see behaviour that breaches, or is inconsistent with, this Code and supports those who do that.

Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to foster a high standard of both social and ethical behaviour at the club to support achievement of its primary purposes, to outline the processes for reporting any potential breaches and how the club will respond.

Scope

- The Code of Conduct applies to all club members (at the club in person, at an event organised by the club, playing online games organised by the club, or formally representing the club elsewhere), and contractors and visitors.
- The Processes for Complaints applies to issues occurring at the club in person and while playing online games organised by the club. They also apply to a report made by a club member of unacceptable behaviour by another club member when formally representing the club elsewhere.

- Issues arising while playing at other clubs or online games arranged by other clubs, involving non-club members will follow the processes of the organising entity (host club, region, national).

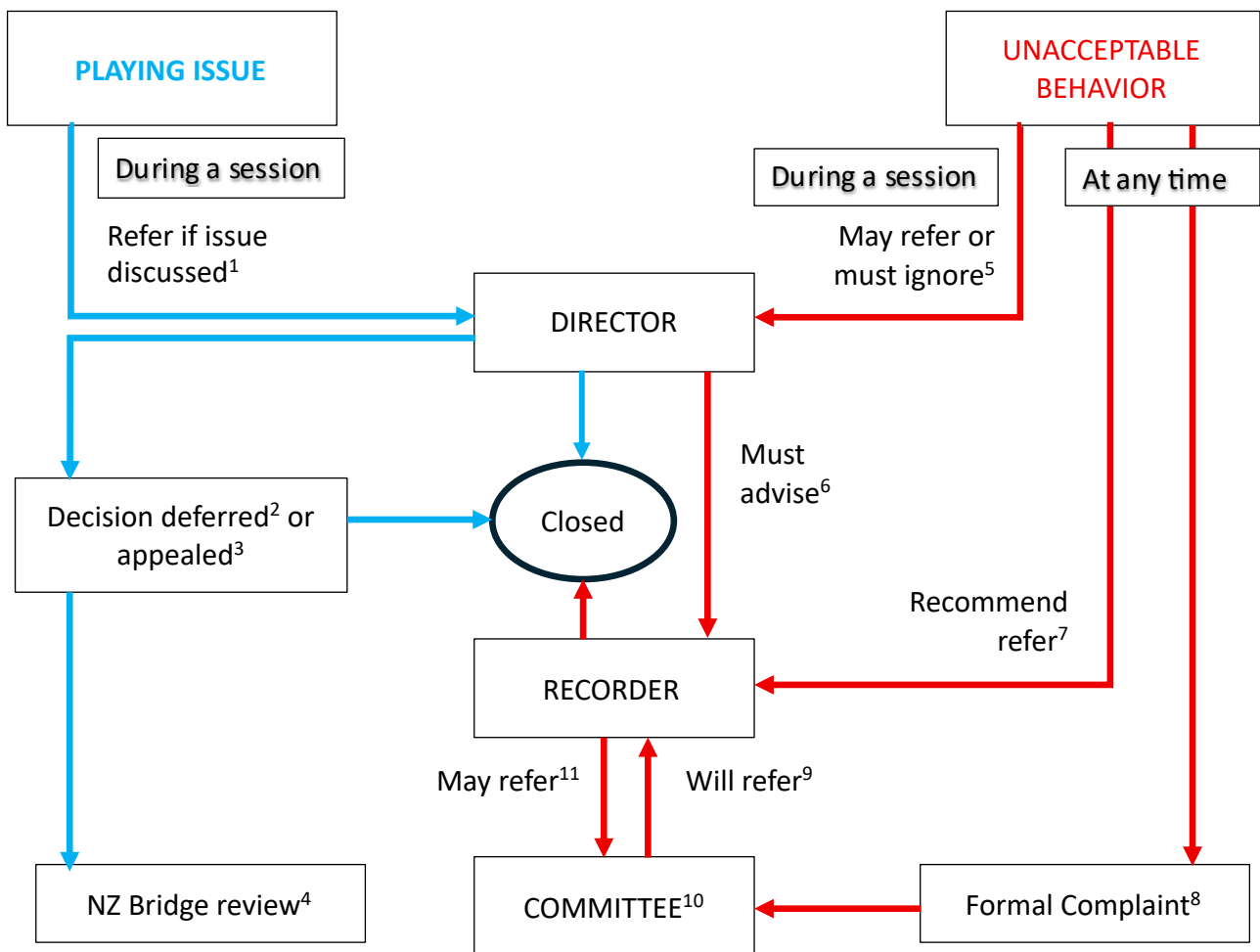
Policy statements - The Code of Conduct

- Members, contractors and visitors shall not engage in inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour.
- The current versions of The Laws of Duplicate Bridge 2017 (“Laws”, published by the World Bridge Federation) and the New Zealand Bridge Manual (published by NZ Bridge) must be followed at all times.
- If an issue of any kind (playing issue or unacceptable behaviour) arises *during a bridge session* a player may promptly advise other players at the table that they are calling the Director and then raise their hand and politely call “Director please”.
 - Under no circumstances should players sort it out themselves.
 - Players will not argue with the Director but may courteously express disagreement.
 - Players should be ready to accept graciously any rectification, penalty, or ruling.
 - Should a player disagree with a Director’s decision, the player has the right to appeal but play at the table must continue according to the Director’s decision.
 - A playing issue should be raised at the time it is first realised if rectification is to be sought.
 - Unacceptable behaviour may be raised with the Recorder after the session and preferably within the next 48 hours.
- The general expectations below provide the base line for acceptable behaviour whether acting in person, in writing, or via any form of digital interaction, and when playing bridge.
 - Be respectful and courteous to your partner, your opponents, the Director and all others whilst at the Club, or elsewhere, in respect of Club matters.
 - Prioritise safety and well-being and follow all health and safety guidelines.
 - Always maintain a professional demeanour, a positive attitude and exhibit good sportsmanship, both in victory and defeat.
 - Act with honesty and integrity, both in your actions and your interactions with others.
 - Respect the privacy and confidentiality of Club information and members.
 - Respect the decisions of Directors and other officials.
 - Respect members’ rights to seek clarifications from the Director.
 - Silence mobile telephones unless permission is obtained from the Director (in case of emergencies only).
 - Follow good bridge etiquette as described in the Laws and summarised on the club website.
 - Respect club property and facilities.
- Inappropriate Behaviour - the club has zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour that spoils the enjoyment of its members. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Criticisms or comments on matters of bridge bidding and play to your partner or opponents.
 - Cheating and unfair play. Comments or gestures that may convey information to your partner or disturb the opponents during the bidding or play, and unfair or unethical methods to gain an advantage over the opponents, such as cheating, colluding, or using unauthorised signals or conventions.

- Use of abusive, offensive, or discriminatory language or comments whether in person, in writing or on any on-line platform.
- Bullying, harassing, intimidating or threatening others.
- Inappropriate behaviour arising from the consumption of alcohol, drugs or prohibited substances.
- Unjustified criticism or complaints, including petty complaints.
- Vilification of a club member, such as by repeated and serious verbal remarks about their sexuality, race or religion, or spreading malicious rumours or gossip about a club member.
- Disturbance of the peace during sessions or at any time in the clubrooms.
- Any behaviour that brings the club into disrepute.

Processes for complaints i.e. reporting potential breaches of the Code of Conduct

See the flowchart and notes below for the processes to report playing issues and unacceptable behaviour, noting that the Committee, its Directors and Recorder will support the earliest possible effective resolution of issues through informal means where possible.



Playing Issues

1. If attention is drawn to an irregularity, then the Director should be called at once.
 - a. Under no circumstances should the Player(s) sort it out themselves.
 - b. Final scoring issues may be raised with the Director within 30 minutes of the end of a club session.
 - c. Other requirements will apply and be advised for tournaments.
2. The Director will usually decide at the time or temporarily defer a decision.
 - a. Play must continue according to the Director's instructions.
 - b. Deferral allows for consultation with other experienced players present and/or the Laws if necessary for the Director.
 - c. A decision will be given as soon as possible.
3. If the Pair (or team captain in a team event) disagrees with the Director's decision, they can request an appeal. Appeals will be handled in accordance with the NZ Bridge Manual section D33.
 - a. Appeals must be lodged within 15 minutes after play ends or when the score is made available.
 - b. The Director will convene a Club Appeal Committee comprising three other experienced players (not including the Director), ideally one with good knowledge of the Laws. If possible, this will be convened at the end of the playing session, or otherwise as soon as possible thereafter.
 - c. A decision will be given as soon as possible.
4. Further appeal, i.e. NZ Bridge review, will be handled in accordance with the NZ Bridge Manual.

Unacceptable Behaviour

5. Unacceptable behaviour during a session
 - a. the Director may be called, or the players must ignore the matter at the time.
 - b. under no circumstances should the players sort it out themselves during a session.
 - c. If raised with the Director, the matter may be closed at the time, but the Director must advise the Recorder.
6. A Director must report any unacceptable behaviour they directly witness at a playing session to the Recorder.
7. **The club recommends incidences of unacceptable behaviour (during play or at any other time) are raised promptly and confidentially with the Recorder** who will endeavour to resolve issues without the need to move to a formal complaint process. All communications with the Recorder must be kept confidential. The initial report could be in person but must be followed up in writing to support any action to be taken by the Recorder. See Appendix 1.
8. The most serious or repeated incidents may warrant a formal complaint. The Recorder can assist the complainant in making this decision. Formal complaints should be made promptly and within one month of the incident occurring.
9. Formal complaints referred directly to the Committee will be passed to the Recorder for consideration for informal resolution if possible. If the Recorder is conflicted, an alternative person will be assigned the role in that instance.

10. Note that the club Constitution clause 40.5 requires the complainant and the Committee (who have delegated this to the Recorder) to determine the best route to resolution which may be informal resolution.
 - a. Formal complaints that cannot be resolved informally and that meet the definitions in the club Constitution clause 40 will be managed according to the dispute resolution process in clauses 40-47 (noting that this covers any club member complaint relating to any other club member). This process may include the formation of a sub-committee to investigate and determine the outcome.
 - b. Any other formal complaint that includes a non-club member will be managed as the Committee determines using the Constitution process as a guide.
11. Where there have been repeated recorded incidents of unacceptable behaviour, and informal discussion between the Recorder and the member has not prevented recurrence, the Recorder will make a report to the Committee which will determine any action required.

Breaching the Code of Conduct

- A breach of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including the cancellation of club membership, termination of any contract with the club, or if a visitor, exclusion from the club facility.
- The Committee also has the power to refer any matter, allegations, or complaint of conduct, discipline or dispute that it considers sufficiently significant, concerning or important to the Board of NZ Bridge for enquiry, investigation and/or determination by the Board's appropriate Standing Committee, and in the event any such referral is accepted by the Board for that purpose, the Committee shall abide any consequent verdict, decision or determination as the case may be.
- If the Committee consider the breach to be of a criminal nature, the club may report the matter to the police.

Review

- This Policy is owned by the President.
- This policy was reviewed and approved by the Committee at its meeting on 17 February 2026.
- This policy will be reviewed no later than end February 2028 or earlier if required.

Appendix 1

- Role and Responsibilities of the Recorder.

Appendix 1

Role of the Recorder

The Recorder role is integral to maintaining proper conduct and etiquette within the club, addressing complaints and incidents that do not require immediate Director rulings but may need attention. Recorders, who will be experienced players, are appointed by the Committee.

Responsibilities

- Be available for informal advice; this could be about an issue of play, bidding or etiquette. Any player or member may contact the Recorder to help them decide on next steps e.g. an incident record with no action, an informal resolution, a formal appeal, a formal complaint, etc.
- Receive, document and evaluate informal complaints and issues related to conduct and player etiquette.
- For those issues determined by the Recorder and reporter to be less serious or lack sufficient evidence for a more formal action
 - communicates, as appropriate, with those involved in the reported incident, especially the reporter and the subject.
 - Provide counselling or education to members when appropriate to resolve the issue.
- For those issues determined by the Recorder and/or the reporter to warrant more formal action
 - Support the reporter understanding the relevant formal process.
 - Report to the Directors and the Committee (or the sub-committee appointed to review the complaint) as required by the relevant formal process.
- May file a report with the Committee about a person who has more than one recorded incident and informal efforts by the Recorder to resolve have failed. A Recorder may choose to inform that person that a complaint may be filed in the future should the undesirable behaviour continue.
- Ensure matters are handled in a timely, orderly, and confidential manner.
- Maintain a record of all incident reports, along with records of investigation and resolution.

Important Reminders

- The Recorder role supports but does not replace the Director's authority at the table.
- The Recorder helps maintain a positive and respectful club environment through education and mediation.
- A Recorder has no disciplinary authority and must not give any indication to the contrary.
- Regional and National Recorders, appointed by the Board of New Zealand Bridge are available at regional and national events. See the NZB Recorder Process and the NZB Manual for more information.
- If a player is disciplined by his or her club for continuing misdemeanours, then the regional recorder should be informed.