



SOUTH CENTRAL HOCKEY

Discipline - Season 2026-2027

Please pass this letter on to others in your club as you feel necessary, e.g. captains, club umpires, club administrators.

The purpose of this letter is to remind all stakeholders of the EH Disciplinary Regulations (2024), which exist to promote fair play, protect the welfare of all participants and ensure that on-field and off-field misconduct is dealt with promptly, fairly and through consistent and uniform processes. It is not a substitute for reading the EH regulations.

Key Principles

1. Clubs are responsible for regulating the behaviour of their players, officials, members, and spectators in compliance with the EH Code of Conduct "Spirit of Hockey" (England Hockey)

Spirit of Hockey - Code of Conduct

1. By participating in the League, clubs confirm that they have established a comprehensive internal disciplinary procedure. This procedure must address 1. Serious disorderly, abusive, offensive, or improper behaviour by any individual associated with the club
2. Behaviour before, during and after any League match
3. Conduct in person or on social media. (Standard League Regulations)

Disciplinary Regulations – Summary

1. A **red card** can be issued to any participant including those on the bench, whether or not a team sheet is available. For this reason, clubs should make sure there are no spectators in the vicinity of the bench area., including players waiting for the next game.
2. A **red card** can be issued during play or for a **red card offence** within 30 minutes of the final whistle.
3. A **minor offences red card** is for two same or similar offences for which a yellow card is issued. In this case, a red card report form must be completed and submitted, as for all red cards.

Dissent remains the leading cause of Red Cards. Too many dismissals occur after a player has already received a Green or Yellow Card but continues to challenge the umpire's decision. In many cases, early intervention from a captain can prevent the situation escalating into a Red Card.



Umpires' responsibilities

If you show a red card, umpires must:

- Get the person to leave the pitch and sidelines (captains /team managers must help)
- Ensure you get full details of the player (again captains /team managers must help)
- Use the online reporting form to report the red card as soon as possible after the match
- Provide a clear, uncensored, and accurate factual account

Umpires must **NOT**:

- Offer an opinion or advice on the sanction
- Agree to rescind or fail to report
- Pre-empt the decision of the Area Disciplinary Panel (ADP), particularly regarding minor offences red cards.

Umpires should be aware that a red card given post-match should be for behaviour which meets the threshold, i.e. behaviour which, if it occurred within the match, would have resulted in a red card.

The Role of Team Captains

Team captains play a vital role in maintaining discipline and the Spirit of Hockey throughout a match. Captains are not simply organisers of the team for a Saturday game but are also an important link between their players and the umpires.

Please remind your captains of their responsibility to help manage players' behaviour, recognise when emotions are beginning to rise and intervene early where appropriate. A quiet word with a teammate, encouraging them to walk away from a confrontation or helping to calm a situation can often prevent a Green or Yellow Card escalating into a Red Card.

The Role of Umpires to Our Game

Please remind your members that umpires are essential to our game, whether appointed by South Central Officiating or provided by clubs. They are volunteers who freely give up their time so that hockey can be played. Without their commitment, matches simply **would not start**.

Please also remind your teams that during games, just like players, umpires may make mistakes or may just be managing a game differently from other umpires. Different styles of umpiring are part of the game and often umpires have to make difficult decisions in a game. When teammates miss open goals, misplace passes or lose possession, they are rarely criticised or abused. Instead, they are encouraged and supported. Umpires deserve that same understanding, patience and respect.



It is important to remember that if players, captains or clubs have genuine concerns about an umpire's performance, these should **not** be expressed through dissent or abuse during the match. Instead, concerns should be raised after the game through the captain and club, either with the umpire's club or South Central Officiating.

Constructive feedback allows concerns to be understood and, where appropriate, coaching or mentoring to be offered. The SC aim is to help umpires and retain them, rather than lose committed volunteers who have been subjected to abuse during games and are essential to our sport. Every umpire we help to improve strengthens the pool of officials available to all clubs.

Finally, thank you once again for everything you do to support discipline within your club. The continued improvement in disciplinary standards across South Central Hockey is only possible because of the commitment shown by clubs, players, captains, coaches, umpires and volunteers working together.

I wish you and your club every success for the coming season.

James Bartrip
Area Discipline Administrator
South Central Hockey