



ENGLAND
HOCKEY

Advice to umpires for completing a Red Card report

Issuing a Red Card is a rare occurrence for any umpire. This advice note is designed to give you the confidence of knowing what to do if you do have to do this. There are new Discipline Regulations which come into effect on 1 Sept 2024 with important changes to the Red Card process. Although the majority of the regulations remain the same, you should read the new regulations and familiarise yourself with the new combined Red Card / Misconduct Complaint Form that accompany them.

The most notable change for umpires is the removal of the Matchday Misconduct Offence process. This has been replaced with the ability for you to issue a Red Card, not only during the match, but also within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the match. For any Red Card incidents outside of that time frame you will still be able to report to England Hockey but will simply need to issue a Misconduct Complaint. More information about this can be found on the Misconduct Complaint pages of both the Area and England Hockey websites.

Any Red Card report forms that pre-date 1 September 2024 must not be used to report an offence occurring on or after that date. The new Red Card / Misconduct Complaint Form is in an easily editable pdf version that should work on your phone or any other device. However, it is always prudent to carry a blank copy of the form so that you will always have one handy and to which reference can be made on the day as a prompt for the information which will ultimately be needed.

Awarding a Red Card may be a stressful event and may certainly involve heightened emotions. Nevertheless, the offender's team must cooperate with you to enable you to issue the card, record and report the offence.

A. Summary of Procedure

The Red Card procedure can be summarised in the following steps:-

Step 1. A Red Card offence is committed during the match or within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the match and you issue the Red Card to the player/ team official.

Step 2. Umpire records the relevant facts.

Step 3. Umpire reports them within 72 hours of the offence on the Red Card / Misconduct Complaint Form (see section below “Record” and “Report”) to the appropriate Disciplinary Body (see section below “Who deals with Red Cards?”).

Step 4. The Disciplinary Body considers the offence on the basis of the facts as reported by the umpire (and where appropriate any additional comments from the Club) and then decides the category of Red Card offence and imposes a penalty.

Step 5. Details of the penalty are sent by the Disciplinary Body to the Club (with a copy to the umpire for information).

Step 6. The club / individual has 7 days from receipt of the penalty to challenge the outcome but, there is no right to appeal against the first 16 days of a mandatory period of suspension.

B. Where to find a Red Card / Misconduct Complaint Form

The procedure is set out in full in the Discipline Regulations 2024 which can be viewed and downloaded from the England Hockey (EH) website as follows:-

1. Open the main EH home webpage by entering www.England.Hockey.co.uk in your browser then click on the “Governance” menu.
2. Scroll down to “Rules and Regulations” then across to the right side of the screen and open up “Discipline and Disrepute” which has a sub menu containing all the relevant documents, the most important for this Advice Note being the Discipline Regulations 2024 (the Regulations) and the Red Card / Misconduct Complaint Form 2024.

You should always complete the form using the latest version from the website so you have the correct contact details.

Whilst this advice note deals with completing Red Card reports, if you are subjected to behaviour that falls short of a Red Card offence or occurs outside of the immediate 30 minute period from the conclusion of your match but which you believe either breaches the England Hockey Code of Conduct or may amount to a Misconduct Complaint offence, you can use the same form to report this offence. A different process will then apply to consider the offence, the details of which can also be found in the new Regulations.

1. Record

Red Cards - after awarding a Red Card:

- note the player’s number so you can record and report accurately after the match;
- then the immediate priority is to get the player off the pitch and away from the pitch for the remainder of the game and any warm down period after it. Use your colleague, team captain and / or team manager to help with this. If the offender



refuses to leave the pitch quietly and quickly this should be reported in the Red Card / Misconduct Complaint form so that the Disciplinary Body can decide whether this triggers a more serious penalty;

- obtain both the first and last names of the offender and the offender's age if under 18. This may well be clear from the team sheet, but if not, the team captain (or manager) must supply that information promptly; a serious failure to do so may be grounds to raise a Misconduct Complaint. Record what happened as soon as possible after the match while events are still fresh in your mind. Making a note of anything said is particularly useful as it is often difficult to remember the precise words used later. Any rough notes made immediately after the incident can obviously then be used as the basis for your official Red Card report.

Note:

- Complete the Red Card form carefully by finishing each section before moving on to the next.
- You should indicate if the Red Card was, in your opinion, issued as a Minor Offences Red Card (see the definition in the Regulations).
- You no longer specify the category of the Red Card offence; the Disciplinary Body will decide this based upon the information you give them on the complaint form (which can include the recategorisation of an incorrectly recorded Minor Offences Red Card).
- Box 5 of the form is the umpire's opportunity to report what happened. This should be completed in as much detail as possible. Be clear and specific; try to give facts not opinions. The role of the umpire is to report the facts. If, for example, the Red Card was shown for verbal dissent and you recall what was said, then complete the form with the specific words. If you cannot be sure exactly what was said, it is better to report only the words you can remember rather than guess.
- It is obviously best to complete the report while events are still fresh in your mind, but at the same time it is often helpful to take a little time to reflect, concentrate just on the facts and avoid any temptation to exaggerate what happened in an attempt to validate your decision. Your colleague has the opportunity to add their comments on the Red Card / Misconduct Complaint Form. Resist the temptation to complete the form "together"; ask your colleague to add their comments on the incident if they have anything to add.

2. Report

The completed form should be sent as soon as possible, and in any event no later than 72 hours after the end of the game to the relevant Disciplinary Body (see Who Deals with Red Cards? below). The best way to send the form is by emailing it as it is specifically designed to be filled in online. Always call your disciplinary administrator to let them know the Red Card has been issued so they can look out for the form.



- 2.1 The bottom of the Red Card form shows to which Disciplinary Body the form should be sent:
- The EH National Disciplinary Panel (NDP) deals with incidents in the EHL and in the latter stages of specified national competitions. The Area Disciplinary Administrators (ADAs) for each of the 8 EH Areas deal with all other Red Cards based on the Area for which the offending persons team is a member.
- 2.2 Send your Red Card form to the relevant Disciplinary Body as indicated on the form. If in doubt, contact the Disciplinary Body whom you think is the most likely recipient for their advice.
- 2.3 Be prepared to offer clarification on any points within the form if so requested by the Disciplinary Body.

C. In Conclusion

The Regulations are very specific that a Red Card can only be withdrawn in a clear case of mistaken identity, so as **an umpire you have a duty to follow up any Red Card with a timely and properly completed Red Card form**. You may agree to deal with a genuine case of mistaken identity (the regulations tell you what to do here) but do not succumb to pressure to turn a blind eye and forget the Red Card. In the unlikely event that you are ever put under pressure to do this you must report it on the report form as it could well constitute a separate Misconduct Offence.

After issuing a Red Card it is best to take a little time to put the incident in context before completing the Red Card form and then taking advice as necessary on where it should be sent, but please never, ever, let the paperwork get in the way of your duty to follow up a Red Card.

Finally, don't forget, if you need any help to understand the process or support having given a Red Card do reach out to England Hockey, your Area Disciplinary personnel or Area Officiating Committee to provide this.

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