



Litchfield Football Club Dispute Resolution Policy

Last reviewed 2026

1. Purpose

This Dispute Resolution Policy outlines how Litchfield Football Club (LFC) manages disputes between members, coaches, volunteers, officials, and the Committee. The policy directly aligns with Clause 31 of the LFC Constitution, which sets the mandatory steps for resolving disputes through discussion and mediation. (See Constitution, Clause 31).

2. Scope

This policy applies to disputes between:

- One member and another member
- A member and the Committee
- Coaches, team officials, and volunteers
- Any person acting in an official LFC capacity

It reflects the requirements of Clause 31 of the LFC Constitution.

3. Guiding Principles

- Fairness and natural justice
- Confidentiality and respect
- Timely dispute resolution
- Impartiality of mediators
- Good faith participation (as required by the Constitution)
- Commitment to resolving disputes at the lowest level where possible

4. Dispute Resolution Procedure

Step 1: Initial Discussion (Required by Constitution 31.1)

Within 14 days of the dispute becoming known, the parties must meet and attempt to resolve the issue through respectful discussion. This step is mandatory under Clause 31.1 of the Constitution.

Step 2: Mediation (Required by Constitution 31.2–31.4)

If the dispute is not resolved at the initial meeting, or if one party fails to attend, the parties must meet again within 10 days with a mediator present. Requirements include:

- Mediator chosen by mutual agreement (Clause 31.3)
- If dispute is between two members → Committee appoints mediator
- If dispute is between a member and the Committee → mediator appointed by NT Government Department

(Clause 31.3)

- Mediator must be impartial and cannot be a party to the dispute (Clause 31.4)
- Mediator must ensure natural justice and allow all parties to be heard (Clause 31.6)
- Mediator cannot make a determination (Clause 31.7)

Step 3: External Resolution (Constitution 31.8)

If mediation does not resolve the dispute, any party may pursue external resolution under the Associations Act or through legal processes. This is permitted under Clause 31.8.

5. Behaviour Expectations During the Process

- All parties must act in good faith (Clause 31.5).
- All communication must remain respectful and confidential.
- No intimidation, retaliation, or harassment.
- All parties must be given equal opportunity to present their views.
- All written statements must be genuinely considered (Clause 31.6).

6. Record Keeping

LFC will securely record:

- Dispute notifications
- Meeting and mediation notes
- Written statements
- Final outcomes

Records will be stored confidentially for seven years.

7. Responsibilities

President: Oversees disputes unless they are a party to the matter.

Secretary: Coordinates meetings, documentation, and communication.

Committee: Appoints mediators for member-to-member disputes.

NT Government Department: Appoints mediator when dispute involves the Committee.

8. Alignment With Constitution Clause 31

This policy directly reflects the mandatory dispute resolution steps outlined in the LFC Constitution, Clause 31, including:

- 14-day initial meeting deadline (31.1)
- 10-day mediation requirement (31.2)
- Mediator appointment rules (31.3–31.4)
- Natural justice obligations (31.6)
- Restrictions on mediator authority (31.7)
- External resolution rights (31.8)