

Westmeath Minotaurs AFC – Code of Conduct

Adopted by the Committee of Westmeath Minotaurs AFC Based on the Sport Ireland National Code of Conduct Template

1. Introduction

Westmeath Minotaurs American Football Club adopts the Sport Ireland Code of Conduct as the minimum standard of behaviour expected from everyone involved in our club. This includes:

- Participants
- Coaches, selectors, assistants
- Parents/guardians
- Supporters
- Referees/officials
- Club officers and committee members

The purpose of this Code is to promote:

- Respect
- Fair play
- Integrity
- Safety
- Positive development of young people
- A sporting environment free from abuse, intimidation, discrimination, or misconduct

All members of Westmeath Minotaurs AFC share responsibility for upholding this Code and ensuring our club is a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable place for all.

2. Positive Conduct

All members of Westmeath Minotaurs AFC — including coaches, selectors, assistants, supporters, parents/guardians, referees/officials, club officers, and participants — must:

- Adopt this Code of Conduct as the basic agreement between the club and all involved.
- Ensure American Football is played with discipline, respect, and sportsmanship.
- Promote responsibility and accountability for personal behaviour.
- Respect all participants regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, or membership of the Traveller community.
- Respect the decisions of referees, officials, committees, and councils.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude at all times.
- Listen to coaches, referees, and officials.

- Actively discourage abuse of referees, officials, members, or opponents.
- Promote the reputation of Westmeath Minotaurs AFC and prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
- Act as positive role models.
- Support and promote fair play.
- Applaud good performances and effort from all participants, regardless of the result.
- Thank opponents and officials at the end of games.
- Show respect to opponents — without them, there is no sport.
- Only enter the playing environment with permission from referees/officials.
- Ensure all activities are inclusive and enjoyable.
- Involve parents/guardians in promoting best practice.
- Ensure safe induction and supervision of volunteers.
- Put the welfare of participants first.
- Maintain up-to-date coaching knowledge and skills.
- Participate in continuous professional development when required.
- Complete Garda vetting and safeguarding training when working with under-18s.
- Demonstrate appropriate behaviour by avoiding foul or abusive language.
- Communicate decisions constructively and appropriately for the age group.
- Deal with dissent firmly and fairly.
- Remain positive when dealing with participants, coaches, parents, and supporters.
- Work as a team with other officials when required.
- Maintain composure regardless of circumstances.
- Report breaches of the Code to the appropriate club officer.
- Cooperate with investigations into alleged breaches.
- Understand and implement the club's complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Manage disciplinary matters appropriately.
- Report misconduct of participants or supporters.
- Ensure rumours or complaints are not ignored.
- Report incidents/accidents to relevant persons and parents/guardians.
- Store documentation securely and confidentially.
- Maintain and revise club policies in the best interests of participants and the club.

3. Code of Conduct Breaches

All members of Westmeath Minotaurs AFC must **not**:

- Shout at, argue with, or verbally/physically abuse referees/officials.
- Shout at, argue with, or verbally/physically abuse participants, supporters, parents/guardians, or any other person.
- Use violence or threats.
- Use bullying tactics or isolate other participants.
- Use unacceptable, racist, sectarian, or homophobic language or gestures.
- Use foul or provocative language.
- Engage in any form of abuse.
- Lose their temper or behave aggressively.
- Intimidate referees, officials, volunteers, or participants.
- Discriminate against any person.
- Ridicule or scold a participant for making a mistake.
- Use social media to abuse, taunt, bully, or racially insult others.
- Use social media to undermine participants, coaches, referees, volunteers, or club members.
- Publicly criticise how another club or organisation handled a disciplinary matter.
- Seek to gain an unfair advantage or infringe the rules of the sport.
- Aggressively challenge a referee's decision or integrity.
- Enter the playing environment without authorisation.
- Berate or embarrass any child.
- Undertake any other unsporting behaviour.

4. Self-Declaration

All members of Westmeath Minotaurs AFC must sign the following declaration:

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and accept the Westmeath Minotaurs AFC Code of Conduct. I agree to be bound by this Code while participating in or attending club activities in any capacity.

Signed: _____ Role(s): _____ Date: _____

5. Reporting & Sanctions

Breaches of this Code must be reported to:

- The **Children's Officer**

- The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**
- The **Club Chairperson**
- Or any committee member

Reports will be handled according to the club's complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Possible sanctions include:

- Verbal or written warning
- Reprimand
- Suspension from training or matches
- Monetary fine (if applicable)
- Replay of a fixture
- Forfeiture of competition points
- Banning of supporters from events
- Suspension or expulsion from the club
- Any other sanction deemed appropriate

Disciplinary proceedings will follow the procedures in place at the time the breach occurred.

6. Glossary

Participants: Any person taking part in club activities, training, or matches.

Coaches/Selectors/Assistants: Individuals responsible for coaching, selecting teams, or assisting in club activities.

Supporters: Individuals who support the club or its teams.

Parents/Guardians: Adults responsible for participants under 18.

Referees/Officials: Individuals responsible for enforcing the rules of the sport.

Club Officers: Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Children's Officer, DLP, Deputy DLP, and committee members.

Sporting Environment: Any location where club activities occur, including pitches, training facilities, changing rooms, gyms, halls, and travel environments.