



Badger Pets and Handlers (Badger-PAH) Standard Operating Procedures

Grievances

Version 1.0.1
Revision Date: 11/01/2020

1. Purpose

- a. This policy regards open acceptance of Badger-PAH complaints regarding but not limited to physical abuse, emotional abuse, harassment, sexual consent violations, hate speech, or personal misconduct that negatively impacts Badger-PAH. Complaints will receive the full consideration of either the Board of Directors, or the designated Investigatory Committee. The policy strives to ensure victims are free from retaliation by any member, including leadership. Procedures detailed herein govern the response to such complaints.

2. Investigatory Committee

- a. The Investigatory Committee will be 3 current Board Members. The members should be as unbiased as possible. In the event that three Board Members are not available to act as an unbiased group, the Board of Directors is empowered to choose other members who are unbiased. It is recommended to choose those in formal or informal leadership roles, or those who have served on the Board of Directors previously.
- b. When the committee votes, abstentions are not permitted.

3. Privacy

- a. Unless otherwise stated in this policy, all incidents are to remain confidential to the Board, the members of the Investigatory Committee, and those involved in the reported incident. Incidents may occur publicly; therefore, the board, at their discretion, may comment on publicly known information, but may not add additional private information. The board is not required to comment on any ongoing investigation.
- b. Non-victims may register a complaint on the victim's behalf as a complainant.
- c. Complaints in which a complainant and/or victim wishes to remain anonymous to the aggressor will remain on record with the board of directors in perpetuity for future follow up should further incidents involving the aggressor occur or if additional victims come forward. The complainant/victim will be notified that the complaint has been logged and that the investigation shall cease.
- d. Once an aggressor has been made aware of a complaint, the aggressor can revoke their membership at any time to conceal their identity. The complaint will be logged, the investigation will cease, and the aggressor will be unable to rejoin the current membership year, and cannot rejoin for one calendar year after leaving the group.
- e. Consequences delivered to the aggressor shall remain confidential to the board and disciplined parties unless the individual was removed from membership. The Board of Directors will then in the next monthly business meeting announce the name of the member and that they have been removed. The announcement will also include a request/reminder not to bring said person to events.

- f. Any privacy violations may result in suspension, bar, or ban from membership to be decided by a full Board of Directors vote.
- 4. Lodging the Complaint
 - a. Individuals wishing to take advantage of the Policy must initiate their complaint via email.
 - b. The first Board Member to receive the complaint will acknowledge receipt within 48 hours of receipt. The response should also include a copy of the Grievance Policy.
 - i. If a complaint is received via direct message, the board member contacted should recommend to the member to contact the board via email to start the grievance process.
- 5. Reviewing the Complaint
 - a. The Board of Directors will review the formal grievance within 24 hours of receipt. The purpose of this review is to determine if the complaint is worthy of an investigation.
 - i. There will be times complaints/grievances received will not be investigation matters. These can include but are not limited to:
 - 1. General complaints about the structure of the group. Feedback should be given to the Board of Directors
 - 2. Feeling isolated at events/in the chat. Feedback should be forwarded to the Social Committee. This excludes an obvious and coordinated effort to shun a member.
 - 3. Budgetary complaints, complaints about merchandise, or cost of membership or other complaints of this nature should be forwarded to the merch committee, or Board of Directors as appropriate.
 - 4. Arguments stemming from a difference of opinion.
 - b. Should the Board of Directors determine the complaint is not worthy of an investigation, the complaint will be dismissed and the complainant will be notified.
- 6. Forming the Investigatory Committee
 - a. If it is an extreme circumstance, an emergency meeting should be called.
 - b. The Board of Directors will conduct a self bias check within 48 hours to determine who is eligible to to be on the Investigatory Committee.
 - i. As a small organization it is inevitable that Investigatory Committee members will know at least one of the parties involved. Board Members should outline their relationship with the individuals involved. It is not appropriate for current or former: packmates, romantic partners, or other close familial relations to participate in investigations.

- ii. Other bias may be present. It is the duty of each Board Member to identify their specific situation to help form the Investigatory Committee in such a way that it does not lose integrity.
- iii. Optics outside the Board of Directors should not be considered when possibly recusing oneself if objective decisions can still be reached.
- iv. A Board Member who declares themselves, to the Board of Directors, biased must state their reasoning to the rest of the Board. If determined that they cannot be part of the Investigatory Committee they must recuse themselves from involvement of the complaint and not discuss the complaint further.

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7. Investigatory Steps

- a. The Investigatory Committee will be identified via separate emails to both the aggressor and the complainant. This must happen within 24 hours of the formation of the Investigatory Committee. They will explain that they will be handling the investigation.
 - i. If the victim, complainant or the aggressor has substantial concern with the makeup of the committee, they have 24 hours to respond requesting to petition for a change of committee.
 - ii. The email must detail the issue member(s) and their reasoning for why they believe the person cannot make an impartial decision.
 - 1. The member must have a compelling argument for wishing to change the Investigatory Committee.
 - iii. The Board of Directors will review and decide if a Committee member will be replaced. The victim, complainant, and aggressor will be notified of either the new Committee member or be notified that the Board of Directors believe the original Committee capable of issuing an unbiased decision.
- b. The Investigatory Committee may conduct the investigation how it sees fit depending on the situation. Phone calls shall not be recorded but there will be notes taken during any phone calls with the aggressor, complainant or witnesses.
 - i. Messages on telegram, email or other services shall not be deleted by any parties until the investigation has been completed.
 - ii. If messages or other contacts are deleted by a member of the Investigatory Committee prior to completion of the grievance, the Board of Directors will convene, review the circumstances, and decide the appropriate punishment.

- iii. If an aggressor deletes messages/contacts after the investigation has started, the Investigatory Committee will use the best available information to continue their investigation.
 - 1. Destruction or removal of evidence must be investigated.
 - 2. The aggressor must be informed that the deletion of messages reflects negatively upon their character and could impact the outcome of the grievance.
 - iv. If the complainant deletes messages after the investigation has started, the Investigatory Committee will use the best available information to continue the investigation.
 - 1. Because the messages were deleted, there may be insufficient evidence to proceed. If so, the member shall be notified, the complaint will remain on file, and the investigation shall cease.
 - 2. If there is still enough information to proceed, the member shall be notified that it reflects negatively upon them, and could negatively impact the outcome of the investigation.
 - c. The Investigatory Committee shall strive to answer the following questions. These are a bare minimum. If the information for these questions is not available, the complainant will be notified there is not enough information and the investigation will cease. The complaint will be logged for future reference.
 - i. What date(s) did the incident(s) occur?
 - ii. What led up to the incident (argument, sexual play, scene gone wrong etc)?
 - iii. What happened during the incident?
 - iv. What was said during the incident?
 - v. Were there any witnesses? If so, who?
 - vi. What happened after the incident?
 - vii. In cases of assault, harassment etc, were the police contacted? If so, what happened? If not, why not?
 - d. If a complaint is received against a non-member, an investigation should still be conducted to the best of the Investigatory Committee's ability. The Investigatory Committee can then decide if the non-member should be barred from membership and if so, for how long.
 - e. The Investigatory Committee will make a decision upon whether discipline should be issued. If discipline will be issued, the Investigatory Committee will use the Disciplinary Policy to determine the appropriate punishment.
8. Appeals
- a. Decisions will remain on file for 5 years after the decision unless the member is banned/non-member is barred. Those shall be held indefinitely.

- b. Decisions can be appealed for up to 7 days after the decision is rendered. The full Board of Directors will review the evidence, and both complainant, if they desire, and aggressor will have 10 minutes each to present their side. The Board of Directors will have 5 minutes to ask questions of each side. Absence of victim/complainant participation will in no way negatively affect perceptions of the board.
- c. A simple majority is all that is required to overturn the Investigatory Committee's decision. Members of the Board of Directors are not allowed to abstain.
- d. For permanent bans or barring, or bans lasting over 1 membership year, the aggressor can request the Board of Directors to overturn the previous consequence at the start of each fiscal year in July .
 - i. The Board of Directors can base their decision on, but not limited to: The facts of the case, if the aggressor has changed/improved, if they have seen a medical professional, etc.
 - ii. A unanimous vote is required. Members of the Board of Directors are not allowed to abstain.

Version	Revision Date	Adoption Date	Comment
1.0.0	08/20/2020	08/20/2020	Original
1.0.1	11/01/2020	12/16/2020	Clarified wording around what is a grievance