

APPENDIX 1

YELLOW CARDS

Totting-up Three Foul Play Yellow Cards in a Season (Levels 1 to 4 Only)

1. A Player who receives three yellow cards for Foul Play during a season (at Levels 1 to 4) will have his case heard by an RFU Disciplinary Panel. This totting-up process for suspension purposes will apply to Clubs operating at Levels 1 - 4 and will only apply to yellow cards awarded for Foul Play. Level 1 citations are to be treated as an off-field yellow card for Foul Play for the purposes of totting-up. Level 1 citations shall be issued by an RFU Citing Commissioner (at Levels 1 and 2 of the Game only) for acts of Foul Play that, in the Citing Commissioner's opinion, narrowly fail to meet the red card threshold but should be brought to the Player's attention.
2. No disciplinary action will be taken in relation to yellow cards awarded for technical offences, save as in paragraph 5 below. All yellow cards (technical and illegal/Foul Play) shall be reported to the RFU, but only those awarded for illegal and/or Foul Play will be recorded, attract an administrative fee as set out in Appendix 3 and be included for totting up purposes.
3. On receipt of the third Foul Play yellow card, the Player shall not be permitted to play any match and shall be provisionally suspended from all on-field activities on match days anywhere in the world pending the outcome of the case.
4. An appeal against a Foul Play yellow card is only valid where the appellant alleges that there was mistaken identity or that no act of Foul Play took place. The appeal must be lodged within 7 days of the date of the match with the RFU Head of Discipline and the appeal will be dealt with at the hearing that is subsequently arranged to deal with the totting up. Any appeal that is lodged after the 7 day period will not be valid and shall not be considered by the Disciplinary Panel.

Two Yellow Cards in a Match

5. A Player who receives two yellow cards in a match (whether for illegal and/or Foul Play or technical offences) and is ordered off after the second yellow card (i.e. awarded a red card), shall appear before a Disciplinary Panel.
6. Where a Player has been ordered off as a result of receiving two yellow cards and one or both of those yellow cards was awarded for illegal and/or Foul Play, then the Player may challenge one or both of the illegal and/or Foul Play yellow cards. If the Disciplinary Panel allows an appeal against one or both of the illegal and/or Foul Play yellow cards the red card shall be expunged from the Player's record. There is no right of appeal against the award of a Yellow Card for a technical offence.

7. If a Player has received two Level 1 citations or a combination of a Level 1 citation and a yellow card during a match he shall be treated for disciplinary purposes as if he had been ordered-off during the match.

RFU PRACTICE NOTE - SANCTIONS FOR ACCUMULATED YELLOW CARDS (TEMPORARY SUSPENSION) (No.2/2013)

1. This practice note is issued under RFU Regulation 19.1.17 and has amended the sanctions guidance in relation to yellow cards contained in the Recommended Sanctions table (Appendix 2 to RFU Regulation 19).
2. The guidance on sanctions relating to yellow cards within the Recommended Sanctions table was developed by the RFU and is not included in IRB Regulation 17. On reflection, and having discussed the issue with other Unions, this guidance does not reflect the fact that the sanction should be for persistent offending rather than the type of foul or illegal play for which the relevant yellow cards were awarded.
3. A Disciplinary Panel may be required to consider whether to apply sanctions against players for accumulation of yellow cards in two circumstances:
 - a. where a player has received three foul-play yellow cards during the season (or within a specific tournament) and the disciplinary panel has to consider whether any further penalty should be imposed by reason of his persistent illegal and/or foul play; or
 - b. where a player has received two yellow cards (technical and/or foul-play) in one match which led to him being ordered off on receipt of the second yellow card.
4. This note assumes that none of the relevant yellow cards is sufficiently serious to merit a sanction on its own because if it were so serious a Citing Commissioner would otherwise have come to a determination that the relevant offending passed the red card threshold and cited, or where no citing commissioner is appointed a Club itself would have cited. The appropriate sanction for the substantive act in each case would therefore have been temporary suspension from the match for a period of ten minutes.

Player temporarily suspended three times for Foul-Play

5. The Disciplinary Panel is required to apply a sanction for the offence of persistent offending, not for the substantive offences relating to each yellow card. The appropriate starting point for sanction is a **suspension of one week**. This sanction could be increased if there are any aggravating features listed in RFU Regulation 19.11.10.
6. The Disciplinary Panel may decide to apply no sanction in the following circumstances:
 - a. where one or more of the yellow cards was applied as a result of mistaken identity; or

- b. that other truly exceptional circumstances exist that demonstrate the player has been subject to a miscarriage of justice. The term truly exceptional is given its normal dictionary definition. Circumstances where there has been a miscarriage of justice might include where a player was temporarily suspended for an act of foul play but on review it was clear that no act of foul play had been committed.

Players ordered off after award of two temporary suspensions in one match (technical and/or Foul-Play)

7. Again the Disciplinary Panel is required to apply a sanction for the offence of persistent offending, not for the substantive offences relating to each yellow card. In this case the appropriate entry point for persistent offending within a single match is **a suspension of one week**. Sanctioning in these circumstances should be determined by reference to the methodology in RFU Regulation 19 and in particular to the application of mitigating and aggravating features.
8. The Disciplinary Panel may decide that sending off was sufficient in the following circumstances:
 - a. where either of the yellow cards was applied as a result of mistaken identity; or
 - b. where one or both of the yellow cards was for a technical offence; or
 - c. that other truly exceptional circumstances exist that demonstrate the player has been subject to a miscarriage of justice. The term truly exceptional is given its normal dictionary definition. Circumstances where there has been a miscarriage of justice might include where a player was temporarily suspended for an act of foul play but on review it was clear that no act of foul play had been committed;

Action Required

10. The last two boxes in the RFU Recommended Sanctions table have been amended as follows:

10(4)(m) 2 yellow cards in one match Entry Point – 1 week

10(4)(m) Totting up of 3 Foul Play yellow cards within a season - applies only to Levels 1 – 4 - Entry Point – 1 week

RFU PRACTICE NOTE – PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH 3 FOUL PLAY YELLOW CARDS (“TOTTING UP”) AND CHALLENGES TO THE AWARD OF A YELLOW CARD

1. This practice note is issued under RFU Regulation 19.1.17 and is to be read together with RFU Practice Note No 2/2013 (above).

2. If a Player accumulates three Foul Play yellow cards in a season and wishes to appeal against the award of one (or more) yellow card, the resulting delay in asking Match Officials for comments, sometimes weeks or months later, can be unfair both to the Match Officials and Players.
3. The purpose of Appendix 1 to RFU Regulation 19, is to set out how Players who accumulate three Foul Play yellow cards in a season are to be dealt with and the manner in which a Player or Club may appeal the award of one or more yellow card.
4. Paragraph 4 of Appendix 1 provides that where a Player wishes to challenge the award of a Foul Play yellow card, the Club are required to lodge the appeal with the RFU Head of Discipline within 7 days of the conclusion of the match. The appeal will then be dealt with at the same hearing that is dealing with the sanction for the totting up of the three Foul Play yellow cards. This means that if a Player has one yellow card, and then receives a second yellow card for foul play and wishes to appeal against the second, the player must lodge the appeal with the RFU Head of Discipline within 7 days of the match who will then keep the appeal on file unless and until such time as the player receives a third Foul Play yellow card, when the appeal and sanction will be dealt with at the same time.
5. In future, on receipt of the appeal notice, the RFU Head of Discipline will contact the Match Official(s) involved in the award of the yellow card and request an appeal report (“the appeal report”) noting that the Player has sought to appeal the decision. A copy of any match footage will also be shared with the Match Official(s) at the time the additional information is sought by the RFU. Match Officials will be able to give their report on the yellow card in light of their own match review. This process will ensure that the Match Official(s) provides as much detail as possible when matters are fresh in their minds knowing that the matter may be considered in the future.
6. The appeal report will be shared with the Club on receipt. The appeal report will remain on the file unless and until such time as an appeal hearing is required, save where the Match Official(s) agrees that the yellow card was wrongly awarded, and that is recorded in the appeal report. In such circumstances, and unless the RFU makes representations to the contrary, the appeal and the appeal report will be submitted to a Disciplinary Panel to deal with the appeal on the paper, and there need be no further delay before the record is amended.
7. If the player should receive a further yellow card for foul play at a time when there is an outstanding appeal, the RFU will include the appeal report from the Match Officials in the hearing bundle, together any additional submissions the player wishes to make on the yellow card.
8. Players are reminded of the limited grounds on which Foul Play yellow cards may be challenged (mistaken identity or no act of illegal and/or Foul Play took place). The RFU Judicial Secretary will then send the hearing bundle to a Disciplinary Panel in accordance with RFU Regulation 19.