

## CODE OF ETHICS



In line with its parent body, the Barbershop Harmony Society, Barbershop Harmony Australia aspires to preserve for its members and for all future generations of prospective members the sacred right to seek haven from the burden of our daily cares through indulgence in old-fashioned vocal quartet harmony, and to that end we do hereby solemnly pledge ourselves to abide by the precepts of the Code of Ethics.

1. We shall do everything in our power to perpetuate Barbershop Harmony Australia.
2. We shall deport ourselves and conduct Barbershop Harmony Australia's functions in such manner as to reflect credit upon Barbershop Harmony Australia and its membership.
3. We shall conform in all respects to the by-laws of Barbershop Harmony Australia and the rules from time to time promulgated by its National Council.
4. We shall accept for membership only congenial persons of good character who love harmony in music or have a desire to harmonise.
5. We shall exhibit a spirit of good fellowship toward all members.
6. We shall refrain from forcing our songs upon unsympathetic ears.
7. We shall not use our membership in Barbershop Harmony Australia for personal gain.
8. We shall not permit the introduction of political, religious or other similar controversial issues into the affairs of Barbershop Harmony Australia.
9. We shall, by our stimulus to good music and vocal harmony, endeavour to spread the spirit of harmony throughout the world.
10. We shall render all possible altruistic service through the medium of barbershop harmony.

***Barbershop Harmony Australia***  
***(a division of Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers Inc)***



*An affiliate of the Barbershop Harmony Society*

## **ETHICS COMPLAINT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

Though Barbershop Harmony Australia's Code of Ethics is binding on every member, it obviously affects some more than others. The Officer, the newsletter editor, the master of ceremonies - each becomes a "spokesman" and therefore bears the brunt of upholding the Code of Ethics - or degrading it. This is especially true of quartets and choruses, for they must exhibit good taste in all aspects of their performance. Certainly, nothing is more representative of Barbershop Harmony Australia and what it stands for than our quartets and choruses and the music they sing.

Barbershop Harmony Australia ("BHA", and/or "the Association") has set up certain procedures which should be followed in reporting alleged violations of the Code of Ethics. Violations of the rules, regulations or statements of policy adopted by the National Council ("the Council") shall be deemed to be violations of the Code of Ethics.

Violations of the Code of Ethics shall be dealt with in accordance with the following procedures.

- Each Club (Prospective and Registered) holds the responsibility for decision making around the suspension or expulsion of a member from its Club, with support and advice offered by BHA.
- BHA's National Council holds the responsibility for decision making around the suspension or expulsion of a Club or an individual member from BHA.
- BHA's President shall be ultimately responsible for the upkeep of BHA's Code of Ethics.

## **REPORTING SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS**

Reports of suspected or alleged ethics violations by a Club or an individual member are to be in writing. Regardless of its written format, the report should include all available details and documentation in order to assist with the investigation and resolution.

Reports may be made by any member of BHA. It is also the duty of each BHA National Council member and each Regional Chairman to report any suspected or alleged violation of BHA's Code of Ethics. The importance of this responsibility must be impressed on each member, and on National Councillors, Regional Chairmen, and the members of each Club's leadership, at the start of their term of office.

## **PRELIMINARY DISPOSITION OF ETHICS VIOLATION REPORTS**

Upon receipt of a written report of a suspected or alleged ethics violation, the President shall determine whether the matter falls within the scope of BHA's Code of Ethics.

A report of violation made to the President will be referred to the Council, and the Council will then institute its own inquiry and investigation.

The Council will make personal contact with the alleged violator/s (and if necessary the reporter/s of the violation) and if the allegation is deemed to be valid the committee shall, to the extent possible, request immediate correction of the problem.

If, after investigation, the Council finds probable cause that the violation exists and is of a serious nature, the President will issue to the alleged violator/s notification of an "Ethics Violation", clearly stating the nature and details of the alleged violation. If suspension or expulsion of the member or Club is being sought, the President shall also notify the accused of that fact, and of the time within which the accused must respond in order to be entitled to a hearing, if applicable. The accused shall be given 30 days from the notification date to respond to the President in writing. If the accused desires a hearing, such response must contain a request for the same.

Based on the response received from the alleged violator/s, the President shall determine if the matter has been satisfactorily resolved or not. If suspension or expulsion of the member is being sought, the alleged violator/s shall be entitled to a hearing as a matter of right, if they request the same. No hearing shall be required if the action proposed to be taken is limited to reprimand or dismissal of the charge.

Should a reply not be received by the President from the alleged violator/s within the 30-day period, the alleged violator/s will be deemed to have waived any right to a hearing, and the matter shall then be referred to Council for action.

The President shall maintain a complete, documented file on each reported violation and action taken.

## HEARING ACTIONS

National Council-conducted hearings provided for under this policy and/or any appeal taken to the Council by a member or Club suspended or expelled by BHA, and any application for re-admittance of a former member or Club expelled by action of the National Council, shall be referred to the full Council for hearing.

All hearings referred via this policy shall be scheduled as soon as reasonably practicable, at a time and place determined by the President. All such hearings shall be conducted under the procedures set out below.

Upon the conclusion of any hearing, or at the conclusion of the investigation if no hearing is required or demanded, the Council shall take one of the following actions:

- a) Dismiss the complaint.
- b) Reprimand the member.
- c) Impose a suspension, for a definite period of time, of all privileges of membership of the accused member or Club or a suspension of less than all privileges under specified conditions for a definite period of time.
- d) Expel the accused member.
- e) Take such legal or other actions deemed appropriate.

Notice of the action taken by Council shall promptly be given in writing to the accused member or Club, and to the complainant/s.

## HEARING PROCEDURES

At least 14 days prior written notice of a hearing shall be given by the Council to the accused member, to the other members of the Council and to other necessary persons. Notice to the accused member shall be given by registered mail, return receipt requested, to the member's last known address. Notice to others may be by mail or electronic transmission.

Prior to, or at a hearing, any interested party (including the accused) may submit written statements or other documentary proof to the President, for consideration by the Council. Any interested party shall be entitled to be heard at the hearing, subject to reasonable limitations established by the President. A hearing may, at the request of the accused member or by vote of a majority of the Council, be held in private.

Within 30 days following the hearing, the President shall make and furnish to the Council, to the accused member or Club and to the complainant/s, written findings of fact, and a statement of the action taken or recommended by the Council.

Any interested party may also submit to the President, within 30 days following the hearing, such party's version of the facts as presented at the hearing.

The action taken by the Council shall be final and binding upon all interested parties, and the President shall notify all interested parties of such action, in writing.

The purpose of Barbershop Harmony Australia's Code of Ethics and policy for handling ethics complaints is to maintain the reputation and public and private image of the Association and its members as being truly family entertainment in good taste. Wherever possible, alleged violations should be handled at the Club level first, by the Club's leadership.

## APPEAL PROCEDURE

*According to clause 5(e) of the Association's Constitution, "The National Council by resolution, carried by a two thirds majority, may expel from the Association any member who, in the opinion of the majority of the Council, is guilty of conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Association. The member concerned may, if he wishes, appeal against such expulsion to a special general meeting of the Association called for the purpose. A majority decision of such special general meeting shall be final."*

Therefore a member who is expelled from the Association may appeal against that expulsion as provided above. A submission in writing must be made to the President who will convene a Special General Meeting as soon as practicable.

Any successful appeal against expulsion will not exonerate the member from any legal action that may be pending or have been taken.