



ENGLAND
HOCKEY

Advice to umpires for completing a red card/ MMO report

It goes without saying that no umpire should ever approach a game thinking “I am going to show somebody a Red Card today”, but at the same time there is always the unfortunate possibility that this may prove necessary. This Advice Note is therefore designed to give you the confidence of knowing what to do next. From this season the Red Card reporting system has changed so please read this note carefully as part of your pre-season preparation to make sure that, if given, you report the Red Card & Matchday Misconduct Offence (MMO) correctly.

Be prepared! It is always worth taking the time before any game to become familiar with the Red Card/MMO procedures on a “just in case” basis particularly as the procedures in question are ultimately very straight forward even if they can initially appear daunting. Carry a blank copy of a Red Card Report Form (RCRF) - see below - in your bag, so that you will always have one handy and to which reference can be made on the day as a prompt for the information which will ultimately be needed. The same form is used for reporting a Red Card or a MMO.

Awarding a Red Card or issuing a MMO may be a stressful event and may certainly involve heightened emotions. Nevertheless, the offender's team must cooperate with you to enable you to issue the card/MMO, record and report the offence.

A. Summary of procedure

Reduced to the absolute basics, the Red Card/MMO procedure can be summarised in the following steps:-

Step 1. A Red Card offence is committed during the match and you issue the red card to the player/ team official OR, a MMO is committed and you inform the offender, team captain, team official or club disciplinary officer.

Step 2. Umpire records the relevant facts and reports them within 72 hours of the offence on a Red Card Report Form (see section below “Record and Report”) to the appropriate Disciplinary Body (see section below “Who deals with Red Cards?”)

Step 3. The Disciplinary Body considers the offence on the basis of the facts as reported by the umpire plus - in appropriate cases - comments from the Club and decides the category of Red Card offence and imposes a penalty.

Step 4. Details of the penalty are sent by the Disciplinary Body to the Club (with a copy to the umpire for information).

Step 5. The Club/ individual has 7 days from receipt of the penalty to lodge an appeal but, there is no right to appeal against the first 16 days of a mandatory period of suspension.

B. Where to find a RCRF

The breakdown above is, by definition, only a summary and the procedure is set out in full in the Red Card and Matchday Misconduct Offence Regulations 2021 which can be viewed and downloaded from the England Hockey (EH) website as follows:-

1. Open the main EH home webpage by entering www.england.hockey.co.uk in your browser then click on the “Governance” menu.
2. Scroll down to “Rules and Regulations” then across to the right side of the screen and open up “Discipline and Disrepute” which has a sub menu containing all the relevant documents, the most important for this Advice Note being the Red Card and Matchday Misconduct Regulations 2021(the Regulations) and the Red Card Report Form 2021(RCRF).

Although it is good to carry a copy of the RCRF with your umpiring kit, always use the latest version from the website so you have the correct contact details.

It is important to note at this stage that while a Red Card and an MMO are obviously designed for very different situations, they are treated in the same way for the purpose of the Regulations with the same reporting requirements – see “Record and Report” below – and trigger exactly the same consequences. The remainder of this Advice therefore assumes a Red Card to have been issued rather than an MMO having been committed.

1. Record And Report

Red cards - after awarding a Red Card take a note of the player’s number so you can record and report accurately after the match and then the immediate priority is to get the player off the pitch and away from the pitch for the remainder of the game and any warm down period after it. Use your colleague, team captain and/ or team manager to help with this. If the offender refuses to leave the pitch quietly and quickly this should be reported so that the Disciplinary Body can decide whether this triggers a more serious penalty.

MMOs – Be clear about who has committed the offence. You must deliver the MMO notification; do not get your colleague or a match official to do this on your behalf. However, if you do not feel comfortable confronting the offender, use the team captain, a team official or club disciplinary officer to inform the offender the MMO has been issued.

1.1 Having issued the Red Card/ MMO, obtain both the first and last names of the offender and the offender’s age if U.18. This may well be clear from the team sheet, but if not, the team captain (or manager) must supply that information promptly; a failure to do so in itself potentially constituting a disrepute offence.

1.2 It is also important at this stage to record what happened as soon as possible after the match while events are still fresh in your mind. Making a note of anything said is particularly useful as it is often difficult to remember the precise words used later. Any rough notes made



immediately after the incident can obviously then be used as the basis for your official Red Card Report.

1.3 You no longer have to specify the category of the Red Card offence; the Disciplinary Body will decide this based upon the information you give them on the RCRF. (The only exception to this is that you must indicate if the Red Card offence consisted of two separate, but the same, minor offences for which a yellow card was awarded for the first offence.)

1.4 Complete the RCRF carefully by finishing each section before moving on to the next. Note: if you are completing the RCRF using an iOS or android device, make sure you do this using the appropriate Word app, free versions of which are downloadable from your App store.

1.5 Box 9 of the RCRF is the umpire's opportunity to report what happened. The Form offers a number of hints designed to make this easier e.g. "what was said and/or done?"; "had there been earlier concerns about the offender's behaviour or was the offence spontaneous?"; "did the offender apologise?" etc. It is here that any notes made immediately after the incident – see 1.2 above- can be invaluable. This list of hints is, however, not exhaustive and as the umpire you have discretion to include anything you feel relevant which may influence the penalty decision.

Be clear and specific; try to give facts not opinions. The role of the umpire is to report the facts so if, for example, the red card was shown for verbal dissent but you cannot be sure exactly what was said, it is better to report only the words you can remember rather than guess or embellish.

As explained above, it is obviously best to complete the RCRF while events are still fresh in your mind, but at the same time it is often helpful to take a little time to reflect, concentrate just on the facts and avoid any temptation to exaggerate what happened in an attempt to justify your decision.

Your colleague has the opportunity to add their comments on the RCRF. Resist the temptation to complete the form "together"; ask your colleague to add their comments on the incident if they have anything to add.

1.6 When the RCRF has been completed it should be sent as soon as possible, and in any event no later than 72 hours after the end of the game to the relevant Disciplinary Body - see Who Deals with Red Cards? below. The best way to send the RCRF is by attaching it to an email as it is specifically designed to be filled in online. If access to a computer is a problem, the RCRF can be sent by post, but first class please given the time constraints. Always call your disciplinary administrator to let them know the red card/ MMO has been issued so they can look out for the form.

2. Who Deals with Red Cards?

2.1 Page 2 of the RCRF explains how the Regulations set up a hierarchy of Disciplinary Bodies with cases effectively being allocated to different Bodies for decisions on category of offence and penalty according to the standard of the fixture.

The EH National Discipline Panel (NDP) sits at the top of the pyramid and deals with incidents in the EHL and in the latter rounds of the EH Tier 1 Championships.



Below the NDP comes the Area Disciplinary Administrators (ADAs) for each of the 8 EH Areas, supported by a network of Assistant Area Disciplinary Administrators (AADAs) to whom the ADA will allocate cases for determination.

2.2 Send your RCRF to the relevant disciplinary body as shown on page 2 of the RCRF. If in doubt, contact the Disciplinary Body shown on page 2 whom you think is the most likely recipient for their advice.

2.3 After sending the completed RCRF within 72 hours to the appropriate Disciplinary Body your duties as the umpire are effectively finished on the basis that the Disciplinary Body alone has responsibility for categorising the red card and deciding the penalty but be prepared to offer clarification on any points of your report if requested.

C. In conclusion

The Regulations are very specific in saying that a Red Card can only be withdrawn in clear a case of mistaken identity, so as **an umpire you have a duty to follow up any Red Card with a timely and properly completed RCRF**. There have been, thankfully, very rare occasions that an offender or teammates have tried to persuade an umpire to turn a blind eye and forget the Red Card. In the unlikely event that you are ever put under pressure to do this you must report it on the RCRF as it could well constitute a separate Disrepute Offence.

Your responsibilities as an umpire are few in number, but the importance of discharging these preliminary steps properly within the required time frame cannot be over-stated.

So, after issuing a Red Card or MMO it is best to take a little time (but not too much!) to put the incident in context before completing the RCRF and then taking advice as necessary on where it should be sent, but please never, ever, let the paperwork get in the way of your duty to follow up a Red Card/MMO as this helps no-one.

Finally, don't forget, if you need any help to understand the process or support having given a red card/ issued an MMO do reach out to your Area Officiating Committee to provide this.

Issued 30.09.2021

