



Fencing New Zealand

(Fencing New Zealand Incorporated)

Black Card Process

Purpose

This paper outlines Fencing New Zealand's process for managing a Black Card after it has been issued by a tournament referee or the Directoire Technique (DT).

Background

Black cards may be issued by a referee controlling a bout or DT in accordance with FIE rules either for passivity or for a rule infraction. The circumstances that may result in a black card being issued are set out in the FIE Rules (Technical manual t.144-170 2021)

Once a Black Card *for a Rule Infraction* has been issued the consequences for the recipient are clear, they need to pack up their gear, shower (if needed) and promptly leave the venue. Any appeals must be made in writing to the FeNZ Secretary General afterwards.

For the referee or DT that has issued the black card, the process is less clear and the purpose of this document is to state the required FENZ process and responsibilities.

There are two types of Black Cards: A P-Black Card for Passivity during a bout and a Rule infraction Black Card. There are significant differences in how they are handled and the subsequent penalties.

Rule infraction Black Card

Once the card has been issued and the appropriate rules that have been infringed stated the official that issued the Black Card needs to action the following:

- Document Time, location (if needed), Rules etc & score on the score sheet if appropriate
- Call the Head Ref and/or Head of DT
- Note any witnesses that may be needed later. People may have been recording the incident on their phones, if this is possible identify names for DT & Head Ref so that they may get copies of the recording.

Request the Head Referee to:

- assign a referee or official to assist the black carded person (the recipient) to leave in a timely manner.
- Remind the recipient that this exclusion is in effect for the event, suspension from the rest of the tournament and exclusion for the following eight weeks of the current or following FIE season as indicated in the FIE Technical Rules. See appendix A for a short description.
- Ensure that the recipient is aware that they will be given the details in writing (via email) and will have the right to appeal. Where the recipient is a minor (18 or under) a copy is to be sent to their coach and parent/guardian. If that information is not available request the coach to ensure a copy is passed to the appropriate person and advise when this has been actioned.
Discussion regarding the cause / decision is not to occur until the recipient has left the venue.
- If the official that issued the Black Card is a referee and has further bouts, the Head referee will hand these off to other referees.

The official that issued the Black Card MUST proceed directly to the DT area without any discussion.

Once in the DT area the Head of DT will ensure the official that issued the Black Card is not available for

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discussion on this decision (Where the official is a referee the DT should provide a Drink/Food if needed and time for them to settle).

The official that issued the Black Card is to document what happened, clearly identifying the location, time, situation (i.e., bout in progress, Weapon, gender, Round etc) and a general description of the environment if it is appropriate. If the official needs to, drawing diagrams is ok.

They will identify any earlier indications that a serious situation may occur.

The official that issued the card will then document, Step – by – step what happened, identify rules being broken in context, and as near as possible include who said what, when.

Once the official that issued the Black Card is satisfied with their statement, they need to validate and sign it. If possible, the document is to be immediately scanned and emailed to Head of the Officiating Commission, Head of DT, Head Ref at the tournament. The original document is to be held by the Head of DT. If any recordings have been handed in these should be stored and reviewed by the Head of DT & Head Referee without the official that issued the Black Card.

It may be advisable for the official that issued the Black Card to remain at rest within the DT area for a time. After a break they may be asked to review events depersonalising the action, this allows the official concerned to reflect and review. They are allowed to add to the original document after discussion with the Head Referee and/or Head of DT.

Once the Head Referee and Head of DT have read the report, they should discuss between themselves and confirm their understanding. They should then discuss what occurred with the official that issued the Black Card to ensure clarity and ensure that they are being supported. All discussions need to be documented/summarised.

Immediately after the Competition the Head of DT and Head Referee will again review the reports and write to the recipient of the Black Card advising them of:

- Rules that were the reason the card was issued
 - the action to be taken against them and
 - the appeals process and any appropriate dates (A sample timeline is in Appendix B).
- If an appeal is being processed the standard penalties will remain in place.

A report is to be written for the FENZ Board and referred to the Secretary General and Head of the Officiating Commission outlining all the above.

If the recipient makes an appeal (within two days), then within seven days of receipt of the appeal a Disputes Panel comprising a Chairperson, Senior referee and experienced fencer is to be formed in accordance with Fencing New Zealand's Appeals and Conduct Policy and Procedures:

<https://www.fencing.org.nz/resources/documents/policies/74-appeals-and-conduct-policy-and-procedures-1/file> .

The Panel is to review the following documents:

- The initial report from the instigator
- The FIE rules
- The second report – if written
- Any recordings located and stored
- The document of appeal from the recipient.

Should the Committee require, they may call any or all of the Competition Head of DT, Competition Head Referee, referee or recipient of the Black Card for further discussion.

The disputes panel preliminary decision is to be given in writing to the Competition Head of DT and Head Referee. Any clarifications are to occur between the panel and the Competition Head of DT and Head

Referee. When the final decision is confirmed by the panel it will send a letter (Via email) to the Black Card Recipient and a copy to the Fenz Board, the Presidents of all regions (and home country if needed), the Head of the Officiating Commission, and if known, the recipient's Coach.

P (Passivity) Black Cards.

During a bout the referee may deem that the fencer(s) have been displaying passivity for over 60 seconds. Following this decision, the referee has a process of Yellow and Red cards culminating in a Black P-Card for multiple infringements by the fencer(s). See FIE Technical Rules (Dec 2021) t.124 for details:
<https://static.fie.org/uploads/26/131735-technical%20rules%20ang.pdf>

The Black P-Card is only in effect for that single event in the competition. The fencer may go on to compete in other events. If the Black P-Card occurs during a Bout in a Team Match, the recipient does not fence again for the team in that match. If the team has a reserve (un-used) that person may take the recipient's place. If there is no reserve, then the match is finished.

Referee is to Refer to FIE Technical Manual for details if both fencers on the piste are awarded P-Black Card, also for the details about how to award matches & bouts.

Appendix A – Penalty for Receiving a Black Card for Rule Infractions

A fencer penalised by a black card (which carries the penalty of exclusion from an event, suspension from the rest of the tournament and exclusion for the following eight weeks of the current or following season) at any international competitions or FeNZ national competitions, shall be excluded from competing:

- in official FIE competitions - for eight weeks, from the date of the offence, (taking account of any breaks in the relevant FIE season applicable to the fencer. The specific period that applies here will be a matter for the FIE.); **and**
- in the next FeNZ national tournament in which they would have been eligible to compete (this may occur before or after the end of the period described above.); **and**
- at the region level - all regional competitions from the date of the offence to the conclusion of the next FeNZ national tournament in which they would have been eligible to compete or the finish of two-month period.
- FeNZ will not register that fencer in any international competition which requires entry by a National Federation on behalf of a fencer, and which takes place during the exclusion period.

FeNZ (via the Officiating Committee) will take responsibility for advising Regions / Countries (if appropriate) as to which registered fencers are penalised in accordance with the above policy. Where FeNZ has been advised of the penalisation of a fencer by a black card by a Region, FeNZ will pass the information to the other regions and the above penalties will stand.

The Officiating Committee will maintain records of Black Cards awarded to FeNZ affiliated fencers, dates and penalty applied.

Changes to Penalty:

Where the disputes panel changes the penalty from the FIE recommendation(s) justification needs to be provided to the Competition Head of DT, Head Referee, Officiating Committee and if needed to the FeNZ board.

Changes from exclusion to a Good Behaviour period: the period must be from date of Card issued for a minimum of six months of the current FeNZ competition season. If the season finishes and the Good Behaviour period has not completed it is to restart (for the remainder of the time) at the next competition season starts.

The Good Behaviour period will NOT finish before the specified time nominated.

Should the fencer desire to be selected for an international competition during this Good Behaviour period the disputes panel must consider if behaviour to date warrants consideration for selection.

Appendix B – Timeline of Actions

Day 0 – Black Card Penalty Given. The official documents incident.

Head of DT & Head Ref advise Head of Officiating Commission and the FeNZ Secretary General

Write to Recipient (Coach & Parent if appropriate) advising them of penalty, implications and appeals process.

Day 2 – or before if an appeal has been received; Black Card Appeal Panel is to be formed,

All documentation is reviewed and discussed. If required Competition Head of DT, Competition Head Referee or the recipient may be involved in further discussions.

No appeal has been received - the recipient is written to detailing penalty and specific dates. FeNZ Board, Regional Presidents and Officiating Committee are also advised.

Day 9 or before At conclusion of appeal the recipient is written to detailing penalty and specific dates.

FeNZ Board, Regional Presidents and Officiating Committee are also advised.