



## **Spectator Behaviour Policy 2020-21**

Boston United Football Club wants supporters to enjoy watching football in a safe and friendly environment. In order to facilitate this, we have developed a Club Behaviour Policy. The Policy relates to behaviour on any property owned or controlled by Boston United and is NOT restricted to the Football Stadium, therefore areas such as any other stadium being used by the club, and the club carpark areas are covered by this policy.

This policy will be reviewed each year and amended as appropriate. The full Ground Regulations can be found at the turnstiles upon entry to the ground and at various other points within the stadium. There is also a Code of Conduct which the Club will require to be signed before allowing any person who has served a banning order to return to the ground to watch matches.

Boston United Football Club reserves the right to refuse entry to and/or eject from the ground any person who fails to comply with any of the Ground Regulations, or whose presence within the ground is or could, be construed as constituting a source of danger, nuisance or annoyance to any other person. There will be a tiered approach to deal with Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) and Criminal Behaviour at both home and away fixtures, the details of which can be found in the attached chart. This could lead to further action by the Club including (but not limited to) the withdrawal of any Club membership and or match ticket and/or season ticket(s) (without reimbursement) and other benefits.

Club bans of varying lengths will be considered or imposed for major or repeated minor breaches of Ground Regulations (please see appendix 1). For minor breaches a supporter will be warned that their actions are liable to lead to a Club ban if they continue and they will then be given a chance to modify their behaviour. A club warning will be held on record at Boston United FC and may be used for future reference.

Every supporter, for whom a Club ban is being considered, will be contacted in writing within 14 days of the allegations and offered the opportunity to present in writing or video, evidence they wish to be considered. Details of the alleged offence and what evidence supports these allegations, such as CCTV evidence or a written account from Club officials or other witnesses, will be made available to them should they request it. During the period of such an investigation it may be necessary to suspend a fan from attending games. Every endeavour will be made to conduct the investigation as quickly as possible. Supporters will be informed in writing of the decision reached within seven days of a decision being made. If the supporter is under the age of 18 years, the evidence can be submitted by a parent/legal guardian/carer.

Any Boston United FC supporter arrested by the police for football related offences either at home or away, will be suspended from attending matches until the outcome of any Police investigation is known. On receiving the outcome of the Police investigation, the Club will then write to the

supporter accordingly. There will be no appeal should the Club then impose a ban if it is based on the outcome of the Police investigation, should the supporter have been found to be guilty of an offence. The minimum ban for any offence where a caution is given by the Police or where charges are brought about by the Police and found proven will be 12 months.

### **Appeals Procedure**

Our appeals procedure provides supporters with a route to follow if they wish to dispute any decision or action taken by the Club which they deem unfair. Any supporter wishing to appeal a Club Banning Notice must do so in writing within 14 days of receiving the Club Banning Notice stating their grounds for appeal. If the supporter is under the age of 18 years this must be countersigned by their parent/legal guardian.

Upon receiving the appeal request Boston United Football Club will acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing. This correspondence will include information about:

- a. Confirmation of details of the original action taken by the Club.
- b. When the appeal hearing will take place.
- c. Where the appeal hearing will take place.

We aim to ensure that the appeal hearing will take place within 14 days of receiving the appeal notice.

This correspondence will invite the supporter to a meeting with the Appeals Panel or Club Representative, to be held as soon as possible for both parties, at which the supporter will be invited to state their case. The supporter may be accompanied by an advocate. If the supporter is under the age of 18 years they must be accompanied by their parent/legal guardian/carer who may speak on their behalf. The Club will not pay travel or attendance expenses for any person attending the hearing.

At the meeting, the Club will provide the supporter with evidence showing the alleged offences, which may take the form of:

- a. CCTV footage of the alleged incident (s), or
- b. Written evidence by Club Officials, or a Police Officer, or any other person who has directly witnessed the offence.

At the meeting the supporter will also be given the opportunity to submit/provide their own evidence such as a witness statement or footage recorded on a mobile device.

It is not mandatory for the supporter to attend the appeals hearing. The supporter will be informed within 14 days in writing of the outcome of the hearing and this decision will be binding on the Club and the supporter.

### **Appeal Decisions**

The appeal outcome may:

1. withdraw the ban.
2. reduce the length of the ban.
3. uphold the original banning notice.
4. increase the number of banned matches.

### **Appeal Panel**

The Appeal Panel may include some or all the following, depending on availability:

1. Club Welfare Officer
2. Chief Executive or nominated club representative.
3. Independent Third Party.

No supporter will be eligible to return to Boston United FC following a Club Ban or a Football Banning Order unless they have signed a Code of Conduct agreement.

One appeal will be allowed after a Lifetime Ban is put in place but thereafter no further appeal will be allowed for a minimum of three years

### **Away Fixtures**

Boston United FC will pass the details of any supporter subject to a home club ban on to the clubs we are due to visit informing them that this ban is in place. This information will be passed via our Information Sharing Agreement with Lincolnshire Police. Information shared will be the name, address and date of birth of the supporter subject to the home Club ban.

Boston United FC will inform all parties that after the completion of the fixture this information should be disposed of.

Boston United FC undertakes and adheres to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure the security of details of supporters and customers of the Club.

### **Breaches of Ground Regulations at Away Fixtures**

If any information is passed to Boston United FC of supporters breaching Ground Regulations at away fixtures, and if supporting evidence is available, the Club may impose a ban.

### **Social Media**

If any supporter is found to have made, via any social media site, any commentary or imagery, deemed to be defamatory, obscene, discriminatory, proprietary, or libellous (whether relating to the Club, its Directors, officials or employees or any other individuals, or any other company – including the Club's customers and sponsors), the Club may impose a ban.



## Code of Conduct

This agreement is made between Boston United Football Club and:

Full Name

Date of Birth

Age

Address

Post Code

Start Date:

I agree that at all times whilst present within the ground or on the area under the ownership or control of Boston United that I will comply with any and all instructions and directions of any Boston United FC official or steward, any police officer or any other safety service.

I will comply with all of the ground regulations in relation to any fixture involving Boston United FC whether this be a home or away fixture, and not act in a way that could cause danger, nuisance or annoyance to any other person. I also acknowledge that I must not post on social media any derogatory comments which reflect badly on Boston United FC including those issuing threats to staff members of the Club or their families and similarly to opposition clubs and their staff.

I understand that further action could be taken by Boston United FC including, but not limited to, the withdrawal of any club membership and or match ticket and/or season ticket (without reimbursement) and other benefits.

Boston United FC may impose a club ban to prevent any further breaches of the Ground Regulations,

or the Fans Behaviour Policy be they major or minor. This is independent of any action taken by Lincolnshire Police in the event of any criminal allegations.

**DECLARATION**

I confirm that I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and will abide by its terms, and any breach of this will result in a club ban for a period of time deemed necessary and proportionate by the club.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If under the age of 18 Years to be countersigned below:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

As applicable relationship Mother/Father/Legal Guardian/Carer (please circle)

Signed on behalf BUFC: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Offence	Recommended Sanctions 1st Offence	Recommended Sanctions 2nd Offence	Recommended Sanctions 3rd Offence	Appeal Heard by...	Minimum number of seasons between appeals	Subsequent appeals heard by
<b>Level 1 Offence.</b> Causing annoyance or nuisance. Drinking alcohol in view of the pitch. Drunkenness in or around the stadium. Misuse of a ticket. Persistent standing in a seating area. Smoking including e cigarettes inside the Stadium.	Possible ejection from the ground Written Warning	Minimum 3 Match Ban	Minimum 1 season Ban	Appeals Panel	1 season	Appeals Panel
<b>Level 2 Offences.</b> Damaging Property or Disorderly behaviour. Foul abusive or aggressive language including imagery on Social Media directed at staff of the club, spectators or the police. Missile throwing. Pitch encroachment. Racist, homophobic or discriminatory language. Use or possession of pyrotechnics. Use or possession of drugs.	May result in ejection or arrest. (Sanctions may range from a 3 match ban to a Two Year Ban)	Minimum Two Year Ban	Club Lifetime Ban for any third offence	Appeals Panel	3 Seasons	Appeals Panel
<b>Level 3 Offences.</b> Abusive, threatening, or aggressive behaviour towards BUFC staff, the Police or anyone else Any other criminal activity	Can range from a minimum of a 12 month ban to a Lifetime Ban	Club Lifetime Ban for any second offence		Appeals Panel	3 Seasons	Appeals Panel
<b>Level 4 Offence.</b> Arrested, cautioned, charged, or fined by the Police including fixed penalty offences and/or conviction by the courts	Can range from a minimum of a 12 month ban to a Lifetime Ban	Club Lifetime Ban for any second offence		No appeal against a ban following a Police caution, conviction, or fixed penalty charge for a minimum of 12 months	3 Seasons	Appeals Panel
<b>Any other offence, or breach of applicable terms and conditions or ground regulations including ejection or arrest.</b>	Reviewed on an individual basis			Appeals Panel	1 to 3 seasons depending on the offence	Appeals Panel

