



SPORT INTEGRITY  
AUSTRALIA

# ANTI-DOPING RULE VIOLATION GUIDE FOR SPORTS

Valid to 31 December 2026

## Acknowledgement of country

In the spirit of reconciliation we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise the outstanding contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to sport in Australia and celebrate the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



Artwork by Chern'ee Sutton

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# Introduction

This guide supports sporting organisations who have a person going through an Anti-Doping Rule Violation (ADRV) process. For this guide, we will refer to that person as 'the athlete', even though it could apply to people in other roles such as coaches and support staff.

The ADRV process can be complex, and every case is different, so this guide is an overview only. Like any critical incident, sports can be better prepared by developing policies and procedures for managing an ADRV incident before it occurs.

This guide focuses on key parts of the ADRV process from a sport administration perspective, including responsibilities to comply with and other things to consider.

**Be assured, Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) makes every effort to support and update sports throughout an ADRV process. You can also contact SIA for support by phoning 1800 161 361.**

Please understand, however, legal obligations can limit the information SIA is allowed to share with sports.

Sports often dedicate a lot of energy at the start of an ADRV process. It's important to note that timeframes can extend to months, not just weeks. This may be challenging and so a focus on wellbeing is critical. Timing can be influenced by:

- The complexity of alleged ADRV(s)
- The level of assistance provided by relevant parties, such as athletes and their legal representatives
- Whether new lines of inquiry are opened as information is received.

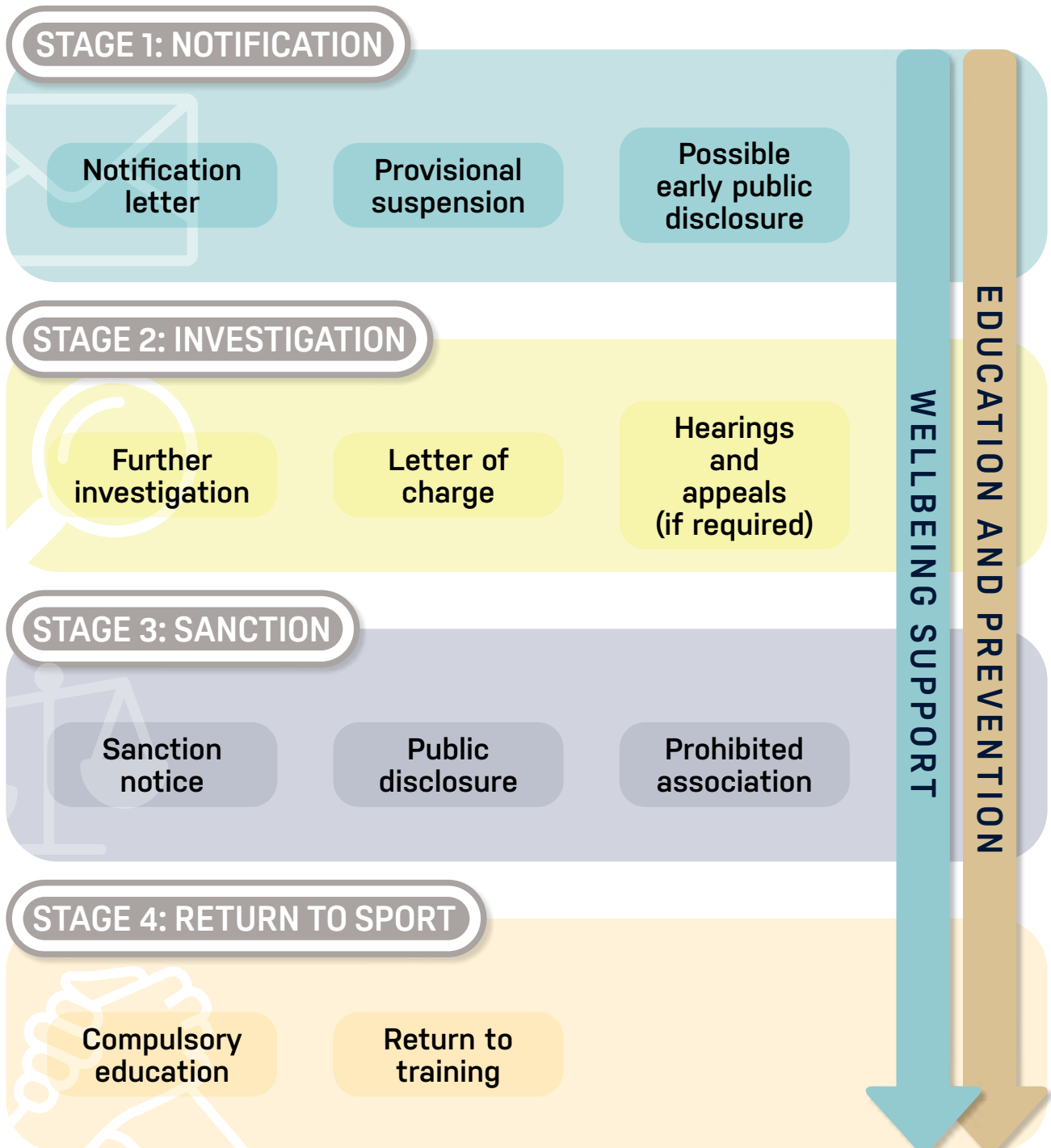
The ADRV experience for your sport will be very different from the athlete's experience. This can be challenging and so it helps to have a common understanding. It's recommended sports use this guide in conjunction with the [Anti-Doping Rule Violation Handbook: A Guide for Athletes](#) to have a fuller understanding of the ADRV process.



Information in this guide applies until **31 December 2026 only**. The 2027 World Anti-Doping Code and International Standards (2027 Code) will come into force on 1 January 2027. Sport Integrity Australia will update this guide to reflect changes to the Code.

# Stages of the ADRV process

The ADRV process for sports starts with notification, when the athlete and sport are first made aware of an alleged ADRV, through to the end of a sanction and the athlete's return to sport. SIA strongly encourages sports to maintain an ongoing commitment to wellbeing support and anti-doping education at all times, but especially when an athlete within your sport is going through an ADRV process.



# Wellbeing support

Your sport should place a priority on wellbeing during an ADRV process. Consider all the people involved:

- **The athlete facing the ADRV:** they often report feeling overwhelmed, isolated, confused and anxious.
- **Others impacted:** staff, coaches, teammates and families are some who may be affected.

If an athlete is suspended or sanctioned, there are restrictions on how they can engage with sport e.g. no use of official sport or member facilities for purposes such as training or coaching. But sports can provide wellbeing support at sport premises.

## Sports can, and should, offer consistent wellbeing support to an athlete going through an ADRV process.

Tips to support wellbeing:

- ✔ **Assign a support person:** At the start of the ADRV process, choose a suitable person to be a direct point of contact for wellbeing support to the athlete. Depending on resourcing, it might be your Welfare and Education Manager, Athlete Wellbeing Manager, National Integrity Manager, Program Manager or similar.
- ✔ **Engage with the athlete:** Discuss who they'd like to deal with for wellbeing support. They may prefer someone they know personally at club level, rather than the National Sporting Organisation (NSO).
- ✔ **Focus conversation on the person, not the sport:** Make it clear that the priority is care and support for the athlete's wellbeing. Sports must avoid discussing topics such as training and coaching if an athlete is serving a provisional suspension or ban.
- ✔ **Keep checking in:** The athlete may be reluctant at first to accept wellbeing support, but experience tells us that athletes may later become more open to it. Continue making the effort to check-in regularly, including throughout any sanction period. Emphasise they do have wellbeing support if they need it and always encourage them to reach out.
- ✔ **Share wellbeing information:** From first contact with the athlete, SIA provides them with information on how the athlete can access free, independent wellbeing support services. Remind athletes of this support.
- ✔ **Care for others:** Consider other people in your sport who may be impacted and how they can be supported e.g. the Employee Assistance Program for staff. Your sport may also want to consider whether your wellbeing staff require additional support.

# Education and prevention

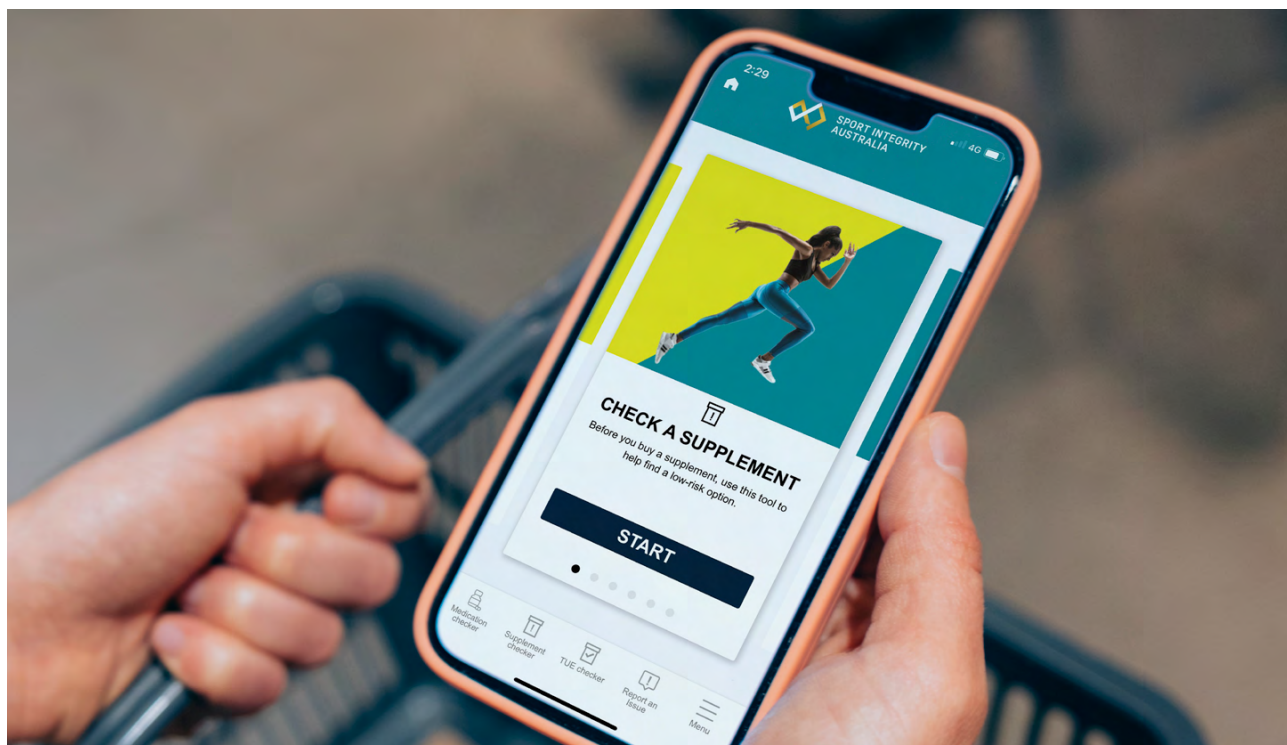
Anti-doping education remains very important for an athlete going through an ADRV process. They must:

- Continue to comply with all anti-doping rules, as they can still be tested – even during an investigation or sanction.
- Complete any compulsory education with SIA before a return to sport.

Other members of your sport might also have questions about the ADRV process. Your sport can use SIA's education resources to help answer questions and keep people informed. [Check out SIA's Anti-Doping web pages and resources.](#)

Anti-doping should also be an ongoing feature of your sport's overall education plan, to inform and protect your members.

- SIA offers free online education on our [eLearning hub](#) SIA Edge. Anti-Doping Fundamentals and Annual Update are 2 very relevant courses.
- SIA also provides face-to-face training, webinars and outreach events across Australia. Look for [education opportunities on the SIA website.](#)
- The Sport Integrity app is a fantastic and free tool that anyone in sport can access on their phone. You can check supplements, medications, Therapeutic Use Exemptions, report integrity issues and access free education.



Help inform and protect the people in your sport. Encourage everyone to download the Sport Integrity App.

For more information on SIA education, contact SIA by phoning 1800 161 361 or email [education@sportintegrity.gov.au](mailto:education@sportintegrity.gov.au).

# STAGE 1: NOTIFICATION

## NOTIFICATION LETTER

### What is it?

This is when your sport is first contacted about an alleged ADRV. At this point, SIA has determined there is sufficient evidence to investigate further. This is commonly based on 2 scenarios:

- An athlete has returned an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) – a positive test.
- An athlete, or any other sports person such as a coach or support person, is subject of an investigation based on intelligence.

### What happens?

#### THE PROCESS

SIA contacts the athlete facing the ADRV allegation, preferably in person or on phone. SIA issues a notification letter to the athlete with relevant information of the alleged ADRV.

At the same time, SIA notifies the NSO, International Federation (IF) and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). SIA will generally contact your sport via the NSO CEO or nominated National Integrity Manager, either by phone or email.

In some instances, SIA contacts the sport before the athlete (e.g. SIA is aware the athlete is overseas, or there are known mental health conditions). This enables the sport to put wellbeing support in place before notification. This is done at SIA's discretion, as confidentiality and athlete privacy are paramount.

#### SPORTS MUST

**Be aware there is a process to come.**

The athlete has the right to provide a written explanation to SIA in response to the notification letter. This is considered by SIA, along with other evidence as part of further investigation. If an athlete has tested positive, for example, they also have the option of a B sample analysis. Athletes have a further opportunity to provide a response in relation to the B sample result.

#### **Maintain confidentiality.**

The NSO, IF and WADA are bound by confidentiality rules. A sport must not publicly announce a notification without SIA's prior approval. The athlete facing the alleged ADRV is the only person free to announce it publicly at this stage.

#### **Cooperate with SIA.**

SIA may request your sport's help with things like membership and education checks. Your sport may need to provide a list of anti-doping education the athlete has completed, especially any education that has been done independently of SIA. It is best practice to maintain up-to-date education records for all athletes and staff.

#### SPORTS CAN

**Check on the athlete's wellbeing.**

Athletes often report feeling isolated at this stage. Once SIA has confirmed with your sport that the athlete has been notified, you are encouraged to contact the athlete and check on their wellbeing.



Appoint someone to make regular wellbeing checks (refer to [Wellbeing Support](#)). If the athlete is overseas at the time of notification, the sport may provide wellbeing support and assistance with accommodation and travel adjustments for return home.

### Inform those who *need* to know.

To prepare for the process ahead, you may need to confidentially brief people in your sport. Discuss with SIA who you'd like to brief to ensure it's appropriate. Discuss with the athlete too, so they are aware who you may need to inform. Emphasise confidentiality in all discussions. You may consider confidentiality agreements. People to contact may include:

- The NSO CEO, or equivalent
- Your wellbeing leader so they are on standby to support
- The Chair of your NSO Board
- Relevant executive who may play an operational role e.g. Legal or Communications
- The head coach/head of high performance

Note, a sport should not inform anyone outside it's direct chain of responsibility. For example, SIA will be responsible for informing a relevant State Academy or Institute of Sport..



**KEEP IN MIND:** Notification can be one of the most stressful and overwhelming periods of the ADRV process. Continue to monitor and support the wellbeing of all who may be impacted. Refer to [Wellbeing Support](#).



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## What's in the notification letter?

The relevant NSO is copied into the Notification Letter, so the sport will have access to the same information the athlete receives. It will include key details such as:

- The athlete's name and birth date
- The date and location of the relevant sample (if applicable)
- The prohibited substance/s detected (if applicable)
- Information on next steps, including timeframes for the athlete to respond e.g. option to waive B Sample analysis
- Information on potential consequences, including provisional suspensions/sanctions
- Wellbeing information

SIA will issue the NSO copies of relevant correspondence at each stage of the process, such as B Sample Notification, Letter of Charge. Please understand, however, legal obligations can limit the information SIA is allowed to share with sports about any ongoing investigation.



## IMPORTANT: the substance detected can influence the process ahead.

If an athlete has tested positive, the substance detected can influence next steps in the process and have consequences on the length of a possible sanction. The substance will be outlined on the Notification Letter, but SIA will also advise your sport.

SUBSTANCE CATEGORY	WHAT IS IT?	WHAT'S NEXT?
<p><b>Specified Substances</b></p>	<p>These are substances that the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) recognises could potentially enter the athlete's body unintentionally. This may include substances found in common medications, or substances associated with supplement contamination.</p>	<p>Under the WAD Code (the Code), a provisional suspension is <b>optional</b>. Check your sport's anti-doping policy to confirm. More on provisional suspensions next.</p>
<p><b>Non-specified Substances</b></p>	<p>These are substances WADA categorises as more likely to be used intentionally to enhance performance. These are more serious if detected. These can include Erythropoietin (EPO), Steroids, Testosterone and Selective Androgen Receptor Modulators (SARMs).</p>	<p>Under the Code, the sport <b>must</b> impose a mandatory provisional suspension while further investigation takes place. More on provisional suspensions next.</p>
<p><b>Substances of Abuse</b></p>	<p>These are categorised by WADA as substances frequently abused in society outside the context of sport. WADA has identified the following as Substances of Abuse: cocaine, cannabis, MDMA, heroin and THC. In sport, they are prohibited in-competition only.</p>	<p>If an athlete can establish that they used or ingested a Substance of Abuse out-of-competition and that it was unrelated to sport performance, they may be eligible for a reduced sanction.</p> <p>The athlete will have the opportunity to provide a statement and/or evidence about when and how the substance was used, which SIA will assess.</p> <p>If SIA accepts the explanation, the athlete may be eligible for a reduced sanction of 3 months. If the athlete undertakes an approved treatment program, the sanction could be further reduced to 1 month.</p> <p>It is important to note, an athlete who tests positive to cocaine in-competition will face a mandatory provisional suspension. More on provisional suspensions next.</p> <p>It is also important to know, the possibility of a reduced sanction only applies to the ADRVs of presence, use and possession. Other anti-doping rule violations (e.g. trafficking) are not eligible for this reduction.</p>



# PROVISIONAL SUSPENSION

## What is it?

A provisional suspension is when an athlete begins serving a ban after being notified of a possible ADRV, but before a final sanction decision has been made. This suspension is applied while further investigation takes place. Provisional suspensions are applied by the sport and can be mandatory or optional.

## What happens?

### THE PROCESS

At notification, SIA advises your sport whether the ADRV requires a mandatory provisional suspension.

If an athlete returns a positive test to a Non-specified Substance, a provisional suspension is mandatory.

It is your sport's responsibility to issue a provisional suspension and to notify the athlete of this suspension. SIA supports this process by supplying wording for the provisional suspension letter, but your sport is responsible for putting it on official letterhead and sending it to the athlete. This is usually sent the same day as notification, or as soon after notification as possible.

An athlete has the right to appeal a provisional suspension or elect to have an expedited hearing to contest the allegation.

If the athlete complies with the provisional suspension, any time served during a provisional suspension is taken off any final sanction period.

### SPORTS MUST

**Issue a mandatory provisional suspension as advised by SIA, notify the athlete and enforce the restrictions.**

A provisional suspension applies from the date your sport sends the provisional suspension letter to the athlete.

A provisional suspension places the same restrictions on an athlete as during a [sanction](#).

A provisional suspension prevents an athlete from participating in any competition or activity in your sport, or in any other sport with an anti-doping policy. Restrictions include, but are not limited to:

- training in organised sessions with the sport, at any level
- competing at any sporting level
- serving as a coach or sport official
- selection in any representative team
- receiving funding or assistance from a sport – directly or indirectly
- using official sport facilities
- holding any position with a sporting organisation.
- participating in other sports with an anti-doping code or in other international professional leagues
- participating in any elite sporting activity funded by a government agency.



## ✔ SPORTS CAN

### **Impose an optional provisional suspension, in accordance with your sport's anti-doping policy.**

If a provisional suspension is not mandatory, your sport may still choose to impose an optional provisional suspension.

This might apply to ADRVs that do not involve a positive test, such as evasion, complicity, trafficking, possession, prohibited association, whereabouts, tampering or administration.

SIA will advise and help your sport draft a provisional suspension letter, ready for you to add it to your sport's official letterhead and send to the athlete.

In some cases, an athlete may seek a voluntary provisional suspension, which means they opt for a suspension while the case is investigated further.

### **Provide wellbeing support.**

Sports can continue to offer wellbeing support to the athlete. You can do this while still respecting the restrictions of the suspension e.g. focusing discussion on wellbeing, and not on coaching/training programs.

## POSSIBLE EARLY DISCLOSURE

### What is it?

An ADRV is generally announced publicly once the investigation is complete and a final sanction is issued. This is known as public disclosure and is covered in more depth in the [Sanction stage](#). In some circumstances, a sport may want to make an early public disclosure at notification or provisional suspension stage. A sport must not make a public disclosure without SIA's approval.

### What happens?

## ➡ THE PROCESS

Your sport, via the NSO or IF, can request SIA's permission to make an early public disclosure. Some reasons a sport may want to make an early announcement is if: the athlete tests positive during a major competition; the athlete is being stood down for a major competition; showing transparency when dealing with heightened rumour, conjecture or media enquiries.

## ! SPORTS MUST

### **Get SIA's permission before early public disclosure.**

Remember, there are confidentiality rules, so it's essential to contact SIA to seek approval prior to any public disclosure. This is a requirement under the Australian National Anti-Doping Policy (ANADP).

Public disclosure usually involves a public statement or media engagement, so it's in your sport's best interests to carefully consider early public disclosure.

Engage with SIA before making public comment.



## ✔ SPORTS CAN

### **Engage with the athlete before any public comment is made.**

Early public disclosure should be considered carefully. Engage with SIA before making public comment. Your sport should also consider engaging with the athlete (and their legal/management representatives). The athlete is free to make public comment about their own case at any time. So, the sport and athlete can benefit by communicating with each other.

### **Respond to an athlete's public statement.**

If an athlete makes public comment about their own ADRV allegation (e.g. via social media or media) the sport and SIA are entitled to respond to the specific matters raised. You should consider engaging SIA in this process.

## ? FAQs – NOTIFICATION

### **Why do sports, not SIA, have to issue provisional suspension letters?**

Although SIA manages the investigation of ADRVs, NSOs are the governing bodies for the athlete's membership and registration, and therefore have the powers to implement suspensions. As such, sports are required to impose the provisional suspension. This is a requirement of the Australian National Anti-Doping Policy (ANADP).

## STAGE 2: INVESTIGATION

# INVESTIGATION

## What is it?

After notification, SIA continues to investigate all alleged ADRVs to understand more about the case. This is an essential part of the process so SIA can gather sufficient, reliable and admissible evidence to prove or disprove a possible violation. It is important for integrity purposes that ADRVs are investigated independent of sport. This means that SIA is not always able to update your sport on the progress of investigations.

## What happens?

### THE PROCESS

As part of its regulatory role, SIA can investigate athletes and support personnel such as coaches, physiotherapists, doctors, and team managers at any time and without them knowing.

Once a notification has been issued, SIA may issue a 'Disclosure Notice'. This is a legal document that requires a person to either provide documents or things (e.g. a phone or computer); give information; or attend an interview. SIA may also ask people to voluntarily be interviewed as part of the investigation.

Throughout the investigation, SIA can collect information from other law enforcement, government agencies and sporting administration bodies, as well as scientific information and other evidence.

If the alleged ADRV involves an athlete under 18, SIA is required to gather information from those supporting them, including coaches and performance staff, as part of the investigation.

At the end of an investigation, if a violation is established, SIA will send the athlete a Letter of Charge. This will outline the violation and the proposed sanction (more information below).

If there is insufficient evidence to proceed, SIA will advise the athlete that the investigation is complete, and no violations will be asserted. SIA will also advise the NSO, the IF and WADA and the matter will be closed.

### SPORTS MUST

#### **Cooperate fully with SIA during investigations.**

Sports are required to provide SIA with any information relating to possible doping behaviour. This includes cooperating with any SIA investigation about an alleged ADRV.

SIA investigators are Commonwealth Officials. A sport person may be committing an ADRV – or even a criminal offence – by knowingly providing false or misleading information during an investigation.



## ✔ SPORTS CAN

### Stay in communication with SIA.

SIA makes every effort to support and update sports throughout an ADRV process. However, investigative and legal procedures may limit what information SIA is able to share with sports.

Investigations can take time, depending on factors such as:

- The complexity of alleged ADRV(s)
- The level of assistance provided by relevant parties, such as athletes and their legal representatives
- Whether new lines of inquiry are opened as information is received.

## LETTER OF CHARGE AND APPEALS

### What is it?

Once the investigation is complete, and if SIA is satisfied an ADRV has been committed, SIA will recommend a sanction to the sport and will issue a 'Letter of Charge' to the athlete. This letter will outline the violation and the proposed sanction. The athlete still has the option to accept the sanction or to challenge it via a hearing/appeals process.

### What happens?

#### THE PROCESS

SIA sends the 'Letter of Charge' to the athlete which includes details of the ADRV, the proposed sanction and the consequences. A copy is provided to the NSO, IF, WADA and the Australian Sports Commission.

The athlete generally has 20 days to respond to this letter. If the athlete promptly admits to the ADRV(s), they may have potential options to reduce their sanction.

The 'Letter of Charge' also includes the athlete's rights to appeal the ADRV(s) and/or sanction in a hearing.

If the athlete does challenge the sanction, it may be heard by:

- The National Sports Tribunal (NST), or
- The sport's own tribunal, if applicable.

#### SPORTS MUST

**Follow the appeals process according to your sport's specific anti-doping policy.**

Some sports have their own tribunals to deal with anti-doping matters. SIA can provide guidance.

#### SPORTS CAN

**Seek advice from SIA and others like legal counsel.**

If a case progresses to appeal, SIA can provide guidance on which tribunal the matter can be heard by. Sports may also want to consider getting their own legal advice.

## STAGE 3: SANCTION

# SANCTION NOTICE

## What is it?

Once the investigation and any appeals processes are complete, the final sanction is applied. This is the period the athlete will be banned from sport, and it begins with the sport issuing a sanction notice to the athlete.

## What happens?

### ➔ THE PROCESS

The WAD Code sets out the sanctions for violations of anti-doping rules. Using these guidelines, SIA will recommend a final sanction to the sport.

The sport is required to issue the sanction notice to the athlete.

Sanctions for violations can range from a reprimand, a suspension or through to a lifetime ban.

Further consequences may include:

- Automatic disqualification of individual results;
- Forfeited prize money; and
- Funding consequences (Federal and State/Territory grants).

SIA will again advise the sport through this process, including providing the content to include in the sanction notice.

### ! SPORTS MUST

#### **Issue the sanction notice to the athlete.**

Your sport sends the sanction notice to the athlete, confirming the consequences imposed, including any period of ineligibility (sanction).

SIA will again advise the sport through this process, including providing the content to include in the sanction notice.



## PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

### What is it?

This is when the athlete's violation and sanction must be publicly announced. It is a requirement under the Code and SIA's legislation. This is unless the athlete is a minor or there are exceptional circumstances that warrant no disclosure, which have been considered and approved by SIA.

### What happens?

#### THE PROCESS

SIA is required to maintain a Violations List which publishes details of ADRVs, once the matter is complete and a final sanction is issued.

SIA will publish the sanction on our website, including the name of the athlete, the sport, the ADRV, the substance and the sanction period.

SIA advises the athlete and sport before this takes place – typically at least 24 hours in advance.

SIA sends a sanction statement advising the sport, and relevant stakeholders such as the Federal Minister for Sport, of the upcoming public disclosure.

The sanction will remain on the SIA website for either the duration of the sanction or for one month after it is added, depending on the length of the sanction.

Depending on the profile of the matter, SIA may make a media statement.

#### SPORTS CAN

##### **Advise the athlete of the upcoming public disclosure and support wellbeing.**

SIA will notify the athlete of the upcoming public disclosure, but sports can engage with them too. It's strongly recommended the sport has wellbeing support for the athlete at this time, as public disclosure can be a distressing time (see [Wellbeing Support](#)).

##### **Prepare a public statement.**

Your sport can prepare communications, such as a media release, for when the public disclosure is published. It's recommended the sport discuss and share the contents of communications with SIA and the athlete in advance of publishing to ensure consistent messaging and avoid confusion.



# PROHIBITED ASSOCIATION

## What is it?

Prohibited Association is an Anti-Doping Rule Violation. Prohibited Association applies to all other people in your sport bound by your anti-doping policy, such as athletes, coaches, support staff, officials and administrators. It aims to prevent people who have broken anti-doping rules from negatively influencing others in sport.

## What happens?

### THE PROCESS

Prohibited Association is not a requirement of sport to oversee, but an understanding of it can help sports manage processes during the sanction period.

Under Prohibited Association, members of sport are not allowed to knowingly associate in a professional or sport-related capacity with a person:

- serving an anti-doping sanction
- found guilty of a criminal or disciplinary offence equivalent to a doping violation e.g. the supply of a prohibited drug, which is a criminal offence, and would also amount to a doping violation of trafficking.

The references to a professional or sport-related capacity are very important when it comes to defining Prohibited Association. For example, Prohibited Association would apply to athletes if a sanctioned person is assisting them to prepare for competition because this support is in a professional or sport-related capacity. This might typically be a sanctioned coach, trainer, manager, agent, support personnel, official or medical practitioner assisting athletes with their preparations. But Prohibited Association could also apply if a sanctioned athlete was training with other athletes and supporting their sporting preparations.

Prohibited Association does not prevent social interactions e.g. going to dinner, the movies or attending a sporting event as a spectator only. These associations are not in a professional or sport-related capacity. However, if a sanctioned person attends a sporting event and provides tactical or strategic advice, then this could be considered Prohibited Association.

Prohibited Association can apply to sport-related and professional interactions that are in-person and online. It also applies across all sports that are a signatory, or member of a signatory, to the Code. This requires sports to recognise sanctions imposed by other sports.

You can learn more about [Prohibited Association on the SIA website](#).

### SPORTS MUST

#### **Maintain vigilance and report breaches.**

Ultimately, the responsibility is on individual sport members to make sure they don't commit a Prohibited Association ADRV.

However, sports need to maintain an awareness of interactions that may breach sanction conditions.

As always, sports are required to provide SIA with any information relating to possible doping behaviour.



## ✔ SPORTS CAN

**Put reasonable measures in place to help members avoid committing Prohibited Association.**

[This SIA web page, including factsheet](#), helps outline some things sanctioned athletes can and can't do. It also details some actions sports can take to help protect members from Prohibited Association.

## ? SANCTION – FAQs

### **What happens if an athlete breaches their sanction conditions?**

The athlete can face an extension to their ban, or an additional ban from sport. This is determined by SIA in consultation with the sport. Sports are required to provide SIA with any information relating to possible doping behaviour.

### **Does the sport have to notify funding bodies of a sanction?**

SIA informs the Australian Sports Commission, including AIS, and the Federal Minister for Sport of any sanction. The sport is not required to do this notification. However, the sport should consider advising their State Sporting Organisations to ensure that the athlete does not register to play in other competitions during their sanction.

As an athlete nears the end of their sanction, they can begin to consider a return to training and competition. Athletes can return to training in either the last 2 months of the ban, or the last quarter of the ban – whichever is the shorter.

## STAGE 4: RETURN TO SPORT

# COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND RETURN TO TRAINING

## What is it?

Prior to returning to competition, every sanctioned person must complete any compulsory anti-doping education endorsed by SIA. This is a requirement regardless of the position, sport or level of competition they wish to return to.

## What happens?

### ➔ THE PROCESS

Through the course of the athlete's sanction, SIA will email them with education reminders so they can stay informed of anti-doping updates – usually once a year for longer sanctions.

Towards the end of the sanction, SIA will arrange to meet with your sport to determine an education plan for the athlete's return.

This will typically include a video call between SIA Education and the athlete (and their support person if they choose), as well as completion of SIA Anti-Doping Education courses. The sport can also include other sport-specific courses if desired.

SIA then sends a 'Return to Sport Education Letter' to the athlete (and/or their legal representative). It details compulsory education required for them to return to sport and a date they can resume official training. SIA will share the 'Return to Sport Education Letter' with your sport for awareness.

Note, an athlete can return to training before finishing compulsory education but cannot return to sport competition until education is complete and recognised by SIA.

SIA will monitor the completion of the athlete's education plan and will send email reminders to the athlete as needed.

Once compulsory education is complete, SIA will email the athlete and your sport confirming the athlete is free to return to sport on the date the sanction expires.

If the athlete does not complete compulsory education by the date their sanction ends, SIA will contact the athlete and sport to notify that the required education has not been completed.

### ! SPORTS MUST

#### **Actively engage in the compulsory education plan for return to sport.**

SIA will meet with your sport to develop a tailored return to sport education plan for the athlete. SIA must approve of the education requirements in this plan. If the sport wants to add its own sport-specific education to this plan, it's up to the sport to notify SIA when this education is completed.

#### **Ensure an athlete does not compete until SIA confirms any compulsory education is complete and the sanction is over.**

The athlete cannot compete in sport until SIA confirms that compulsory education is done and the sanction has expired.



## ✔ SPORTS CAN

### Maintain up-to-date contact details of the athlete.

This helps with regular wellbeing and education checks but also supports SIA to ensure the athlete is receiving important information.

### Encourage the athlete to participate in education.

Sports can assist an athlete's transition back to sport by encouraging and reminding them to engage in anti-doping education throughout their sanction. It's especially important to do this as the end of the sanction approaches and education becomes compulsory.

## ? RETURN TO SPORT – FAQs

### Where there are limited transfer windows or registration cut-offs in a sport, can a sanctioned athlete register with that sport before their sanction ends?

It is a matter for the sport to accept a registration. There is nothing under the [Australian National Anti-Doping Policy \(ANADP\)](#) that prevents a sport from registering an athlete while they are sanctioned, as long as the athlete does not undertake any activities that breach their sanction e.g. training or competing before being cleared to resume. More details on these restricted activities are described in article 10.14.1 of the ANADP.

### Can an athlete return to official training with the sport prior to the end of their sanction?

Yes, but SIA will make the return to training date clear to both the athlete and sport. The length of the ban determines when a sanctioned person can resume official training. It is either the last 2 months of the ban, or the last quarter of the ban – whichever is the shorter. Sports must continue to uphold all training restrictions until SIA advises that training can resume.

### What happens if an athlete retires during their sanction period?







The athlete must notify SIA and the sporting administration body that imposed the sanction (i.e. usually the NSO, or in some cases this may be the IF) in writing of the decision to retire. Note, this effectively pauses their sanction, so the sanction will recommence if they decide to come out of retirement. For example, if an athlete formally retires with 2 years remaining on their sanction, and they decide to return to sport 3 years later, they still need to complete the remaining 2 years of their sanction before they can return to sport. The sanction remains no matter what position they want to return to in sport. For example, if they retire as an athlete, they will not be able to coach either until the remainder of the sanction is complete.




If a sanctioned athlete who has retired later wants to come out of retirement, they must also notify SIA and their sport's IF in writing. The athlete must give notice of at least 6 months, so they are available for anti-doping testing before their return to sport.

[See more information here.](#)

# Summary of key steps

This checklist summary gives sports a general overview only of the ADRV process. SIA makes every effort to support and update sports throughout an ADRV process. You can also contact SIA for support by phoning 1800 161 361.

STEP	SPORT INTEGRITY AUSTRALIA	SPORT
<b>Positive test or investigation</b> 	Begin investigation, initiated by an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) in a sample or information relating to a possible ADRV.	
<b>Individual and Sport Notified</b> 	Notify the athlete of potential ADRV/s, along with the NSO, IF and WADA.  Issue a Notification Letter outlining next steps, including timelines, and wellbeing support.	Initiate wellbeing support  Maintain confidentiality, only informing those who need to know.  Support SIA's requests for relevant information.
	Support the NSO with drafting a provisional suspension letter, if applicable.	Notify the athlete of any provisional suspension/s, as advised by SIA and/or according to the sport's anti-doping policy.
<b>Athlete opportunity to explain</b> 	As part of notification, give athletes the options and timelines to respond. This includes a chance to provide a written explanation to SIA in response to the ADRV allegation.	Seek approval from SIA before making a public announcement about any ADRV allegation, especially prior to sanction (early public disclosure).
<b>Sport Integrity Australia reviews evidence</b> 	Continue to investigate and gather supporting evidence. This can include interviews.	Provide any support requested of SIA, which may include documents, evidence and information.
<b>Letter of Charge or no further action</b> 	If satisfied an ADRV has been committed, recommend a sanction to the sport and issue a 'Letter of Charge' to the athlete.	The NSO will receive a copy of the Letter of Charge at the same time as the athlete, as will the IF, WADA and relevant Government agencies.
<b>Accept or contest decision</b> 	Await the athlete's response to the Letter of Charge. There is generally 20 days provided to accept the charge/s, or seek a hearing/appeal.	Follow the appeals process according to the sport's specific anti-doping policy.

STEP	SPORT INTEGRITY AUSTRALIA	SPORT
<b>Sanction notice &amp; public disclosure</b>  	<p>Once hearings/appeals are exhausted, advise the sport on a sanction and support the NSO with drafting the Sanction Notice.</p>	<p>Send the Sanction Notice to the athlete and begin imposing the sanction at all levels of the sport.</p>
	<p>Publish the sanction on the Violations List on the SIA website, including the name of the athlete, the sport, the ADRV, the substance and the sanction period.</p>	<p>Remove any necessary accreditation, membership and record the sanction on membership database.</p>
<b>During sanction</b>  	<p>Remain available to sanctioned athletes for information support during their sanction.</p>	<p>Maintain sanction restrictions at all levels of the sport.  Maintain ongoing wellbeing support.</p>
<b>Return to sport</b>  	<p>Engage with the athlete and sport to determine a return to sport education plan.  Advise the sanctioned athlete and sport of the return to training and return to sport protocols and dates.</p>	<p>Maintain the sanction until formal advice from SIA that the athlete can return to training, and then again, to sport.</p>



## **SPORT INTEGRITY AUSTRALIA**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

To enquire, provide feedback or reproduce the contents of the document please contact:

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