

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

345 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10154
p. (212) 450-2000
f. (212) 681-7573
nflmedia.com



Greg.Aiello@nfl.com
Senior Vice President of Communications

Brian.McCarthy@nfl.com
Vice President of Corporate Communications

Michael.Signora@nfl.com
Vice President of Football Communications

COMMUNICATIONS

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**NFL TEAMS UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSE COMPREHENSIVE
NEW CONDUCT POLICY; OWNERSHIP COMMITTEE NAMED,
NEW DISCIPLINARY OFFICER TO BE HIRED**

NFL teams unanimously endorsed a revised and strengthened Personal Conduct Policy for all NFL employees that was presented today at a league meeting in Dallas.

The policy was developed after an extensive series of meetings and discussions over the past four months with a wide range of experts and others inside and outside of the NFL, including current and former players, the NFL Players Association, domestic violence/sexual assault experts and advocates, law enforcement officials, academic experts, and business leaders (see attached list).

The NFL has had a formal policy and program addressing off-field conduct since 1997 that was enhanced in 2007. The new policy significantly builds on the foundation of the previous programs.

“With considerable assistance from the many people and organizations we consulted, NFL ownership has endorsed an enhanced policy that is significantly more robust, thorough, and formal,” Commissioner **ROGER GOODELL** said. “We now have a layered evaluation process to take into account a diversity of expert views. This will better enable us to make appropriate decisions and ensure accountability for everyone involved in the process.”

The new policy lays out a clear series of steps to be taken when there is an incident that requires review. New measures include:

- Additional NFL-funded counseling and services for victims, families, and violators.
- A more extensive list of prohibited conduct.
- Independent investigative procedures.
- Specific criteria for paid leave for an individual formally charged with a crime of violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.
- An expert group of outside advisors to review and evaluate potential violations and consult on other elements of the policy.
- A baseline suspension of six games without pay for violations involving assault, battery, domestic violence, dating violence, child abuse, other forms of family violence, or sexual assault, with consideration given to possible mitigating or aggravating circumstances.
- The appointment by the commissioner of a highly qualified league office executive with a criminal justice background to issue initial discipline. The disciplinary officer will be hired for

a newly created position of Special Counsel for Investigations and Conduct. This individual will oversee the NFL's investigatory procedures and determine discipline for violations of the Personal Conduct Policy. For players, this is consistent with past practice under the CBA in which a member of the commissioner's staff has generally issued discipline for off-field misconduct.

- An appeals process pursuant to Article 46 (Commissioner Discipline) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for players or to applicable club or league procedures for non-players. The commissioner may name a panel that consists of independent experts to participate in deciding an appeal.
- The appointment by Commissioner Goodell of a new league Conduct Committee comprised of representatives of NFL ownership that will review the policy at least annually and recommend appropriate changes with advice from outside experts. The committee will ensure that the policy remains current and consistent with best practices and evolving legal and social standards. Members of the committee are Cardinals owner **MICHAEL BIDWILL** (committee chair), Falcons owner **ARTHUR BLANK**, Chiefs owner **CLARK HUNT**, **DEE HASLAM** (wife of Browns owner **JIMMY HASLAM**), Cowboys Executive Vice President and chair of The NFL Foundation **CHARLOTTE JONES ANDERSON**, Bears owner **GEORGE MC CASKEY**, Texans owner **ROBERT MC NAIR**, and two former NFL players that are part of NFL ownership – **WARRICK DUNN** (Falcons) and **JOHN STALLWORTH** (Steelers).

The policy states: "It is a privilege to be part of the National Football League. **Everyone** who is part of the league must refrain from conduct detrimental to the integrity of and public confidence in the NFL. This includes owners, coaches, players, other team employees, game officials, and employees of the league office, NFL Films, NFL Network or any other NFL business. Conduct by anyone in the league that is illegal, violent, dangerous, or irresponsible puts innocent victims at risk, damages the reputation of others in the game, and undercuts public respect and support for the NFL. We must endeavor at all times to be people of high character; we must show respect for others inside and outside our workplace; and we must strive to conduct ourselves in ways that favorably reflect on ourselves, our teams, the communities we represent, and the NFL."

"To this end," the policy states, "the league has increased education regarding respect and appropriate behavior, has provided resources for all employees to assist them in conforming their behavior to the standards expected of them, and has made clear that the league's goal is to prevent violations of the Personal Conduct Policy. In order to uphold our high standards, when violations of this Personal Conduct Policy do occur, appropriate disciplinary action must follow."

The policy further says: "If you are convicted of a crime or subject to a disposition of a criminal proceeding, you are subject to discipline. But even if your conduct does not result in a criminal conviction, if the league finds that you have engaged in conduct [prohibited by the policy], you will be subject to discipline."

The Personal Conduct Policy is issued pursuant to the commissioner's authority under the NFL Constitution and Bylaws to define and sanction conduct detrimental to the NFL. The policy defines the standards that apply to everyone in the NFL and the steps the league will take to promote conduct that is consistent with those expectations.

An important element of the new policy is expanded services of evaluation and counseling available to all NFL employees.

"Anyone arrested or charged with conduct that would violate this policy will be offered a formal clinical evaluation, the cost of which will be paid by the league, and appropriate follow-up education, counseling or treatment programs," the policy states. "In cases reviewed for possible disciplinary

action, the employee's decision to make beneficial use of these clinical services will be considered a positive factor in determining eventual discipline if a violation is found. These evaluations will be performed at designated facilities around the country. The employee may select the particular provider at the designated facility.

"In appropriate cases (for example, cases involving domestic violence or child abuse), the league will make available assistance to victims and families, as well as the employee. This assistance may include providing or direction to appropriate counseling, social and other services, clergy, medical professionals, and specialists in dealing with children and youth. These resources will be provided through specialized Critical Response Teams affiliated with the league office and with member clubs. These teams will develop standard protocols based on expert recommendations of appropriate and constructive responses to reported incidents of violence, particularly incidents of domestic violence, child abuse, or sexual assault. These response teams will assist victims and families in matters of personal security and other needs following a reported incident. In addition, information about local non-league resources to help victims and family members will be provided to affected parties."

Attached is the complete policy, a fact sheet on how it works, a list of organizations and individuals that were consulted during its development, a fact sheet on other ways the NFL is responding to the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault, and an NFL mission and values statement that serves as a foundation for the policy.

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