



parkrun Sanctions Policy

Policy / Procedure	Sanctions Policy
Applicable to:	parkrun Global Ltd and all its subsidiaries and other entities in the parkrun Global movement
Version	1
Classification	Public
Owner	Legal and Governance
Approver	Head of Legal and Governance
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Scope

This Sanctions Policy is a global policy, and applies across all countries in which parkrun operates.

The parkrun Sanctions Panel

The parkrun Sanctions Panel is the process parkrun uses to fairly and consistently address concerns and risks, including safeguarding concerns.

Who constitutes the parkrun Sanctions Panel?

The parkrun Sanctions Panel will be made up of a minimum of four members of staff. As a minimum, this will include three safeguarding professionals with appropriate experience and qualifications, and one parkrun representative from the country where the incident took place.

When could a Sanctions Panel take place?

A Sanctions Panel may take place if there is sufficient reason to believe that there may be significant concern regarding an individual's participation that could result in them putting themselves or others at risk, either at a parkrun event, or in the wider parkrun setting. We will endeavour to hold the Sanctions Panel as soon as is reasonably possible after the threshold for the Panel has been met, and typically within four weeks.

Examples* of these situations include:

- Where the action of an individual may cause concern but does not reach the threshold of a criminal act
- Where an individual has not acted within the rules or expected behaviour at a parkrun event
- Where an individual has not acted within the rules or expected behaviour in connection with parkrun, and where that behaviour could have an impact on parkrun or on other individuals who attend.
- Where an individual who volunteers and is perceived to be in a position of authority and representing parkrun is deemed to be a risk of harm to others or reputational risk, due to this conferred status.

**This is not an exhaustive list and a panel can be convened in other situations.*

The Sanctions Panel is in addition to and runs alongside the [parkrun terms and conditions](#) and the [parkrun Safeguarding Policy Statement](#).

Where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, parkrun reserves the right to impose an interim sanction on an individual prior to a Sanctions Panel taking place, which will remain in place until the incident has been fully investigated.

If parkrun is informed by external services such as law enforcement agencies that an individual should not attend, restrictions can be put in place without the need for a Sanctions Panel.

In some circumstances there may be an opportunity to mutually agree with an individual about limitations to their participation - for example they might agree not to attend a specific event. These discussions can be held without the need for a Sanctions Panel.

Sanctions Panel process:

If it is decided that a Sanctions Panel should be held, the following process will be followed:

- The Sanctions panel will take reasonable steps to review and collate any relevant evidence or information pertinent to the incident or concern.
- The Sanctions panel will take reasonable steps to investigate the incident/ concern. parkrun will allocate reasonable time and effort to address any issues pertaining to individual parkrunners. Where possible, parkrun will take careful consideration before making any decision and carry out an investigation if appropriate. This may involve gathering any further relevant information and also communication with anyone else involved/impacted.
- If appropriate, the Sanctions panel will inform the individual about the panel and give them opportunity to submit evidence or perspective. In deciding this, the panel will consider whether contacting the individual would put themselves or others at further risk of harm.
- All information gathered will be summarised in a Safeguarding Panel review document which will be held securely and only accessible to those with a need to access it.

- The panel will meet and consider the information available and use a consistent approach to risk analysis (see below for details) to make a recommendation for outcome.
- Whenever necessary, the Sanctions Panel will share concerns with appropriate external bodies, for example the police or local services.
- The individual concerned will be notified, in writing by email, of the outcome and of the Appeal process.

Persons Under 18

Special consideration will be given to incidents where anyone involved is a child under the age of 18. In these situations, the panel may speak to the parent or carer of the child or to the child themselves depending on the circumstances. At all times the safeguarding and best interests of the child will be paramount and any communication or decisions made will be done so with a view to minimise any risks that may arise for them.

If there are any reasons that the panel believes a child is at risk of harm, they will report to the relevant statutory authorities.

Investigation and Risk Assessment

Investigation process:

Investigations will vary widely in their scale and complexity and may involve:

- direct communication with the alleged victim
- direct communication with witnesses
- direct communication with the individual the concern has been raised about
- examination of documents and reports
- new criminal records check
- contact with statutory agencies, designated officer and other sports bodies

As an organisation, we have a duty of care to our employees and volunteers and therefore reserve the right to assess the appropriate form of communication or contact with anyone involved in this process. At no point will a face to face meeting be arranged with any member of parkrun staff.

Communications with known or alleged offenders will only be conducted by those with suitable training or experience.

The investigation will be conducted within the reasonable scope and resources available to parkrun. We also reserve the right not to investigate any claims which appear to be malicious or vexatious.

Risk assessment may be part of the investigation or be used to inform future decisions about this case or individual. The parkrun Sanctions Panel will meet and consider the information available and, using a Risk Analysis Matrix, will make a recommendation for outcome.

Decision Making

The parkrun Sanctions Panel will seek to make defensible decisions which would withstand subsequent scrutiny.

A defensible decision is when:

- all reasonable steps have been taken to gather as much relevant information as possible within the scope of the resources available to the organisation
- an assessment has been made which addresses risk factors
- information is collected from within and outside the organisation and evaluated
- decisions and rationale are recorded
- there are transparent and consistent processes

The parkrun Sanctions Panel will make their decision subject to the civil standard of proof, in that they must be satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the actions or incidents relating to the panel took place i.e. a 51% probability, often described as ‘more likely than not’. This is a lower burden of proof than the ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ level required for criminal cases.

The panel will also consider:

- If there has been a breach of the law

- If the individual has broken a parkrun policy or process or Code of Conduct
- Whether they have acknowledged any potential harm caused or attempted to amend their actions
- Whether the individual has complied and co-operated with any restrictions or requests made to them
- The panel will also consider the potential impact on others if the individual continues to attend. This could include the impact on the event team, and the wider parkrun community.

Outcomes

Potential sanctions include restricting an individual's participation:

- By volunteering
- By completing the course
- At a named event
- At all 5k events
- At all junior events
- At all parkrun events

These sanctions may be subject to a period of time, or may be indefinite, depending on the circumstances. The Sanctions Panel will communicate the outcome to the individuals directly involved on completion of the panel. If the sanction is subject to a period of time, for example six months, when that period is 28 days away from completion, an individual may contact the Sanction Panel via the [Appeals Form](#), stating their grounds as to why they believe the sanction should be lifted.

Appeals

Once the decision has been communicated to the individual, they will also be informed of their right to appeal the decision. An individual has a right to appeal only on the following grounds:

- If there has been a failure to follow the process outlined above;
- If the decision made is one that no reasonable person could have arrived at; or

- If there is evidence that the Sanctions Panel, any member of it, or any person involved in making the relevant decision, lacked the required independence and has demonstrated bias or bad faith when making the decision.

An individual can not appeal simply because they disagree with the decision made by parkrun.

The appeal must be:

- Made by the online [Appeals Form](#);
- Sent within 28 days of receiving the decision

The appeal will be reviewed by the parkrun Appeals Team, who are independent of the parkrun Sanctions panel. The appeal decision will be made within 28 days of receipt of the form and the individual will be informed of the outcome by email. There will be no further right of appeal.

Any sanctions applied to the individual will stand from the date of receiving the initial sanction, or from the date of the panel decision, whichever is sooner. If the individual does run / walk / volunteer at 5k / junior parkrun events, their results / credits will be removed (in accordance with their sanction). Where appropriate, local law enforcement agencies will be informed.

The decision made will be final and, following the initial appeal period, there is no subsequent period in which to appeal the decision, and it will only be reviewed further if a time-limited sanction was agreed.

This appeals process is separate to the complaints procedure which can be found [here](#).

Persistent and Vexatious Complaints

parkrun expects its employees and participants, which includes volunteers, to be treated with courtesy and respect at all times and will protect them from unacceptable behaviour at all times.

Unacceptable behaviour may include:

- abusive, threatening or inappropriate language, either verbally or in writing;
- sending multiple emails, especially over a short timescale
- making multiple calls / leaving multiple voicemails
- otherwise unreasonably pursuing a complaint

A vexatious complainant is an individual who:

- is raising a complaint contentiously, without reasonable grounds or with little merit or substance

or

- is pursuing a complaint to an unreasonable degree

or

- is continuing to pursue a complaint after appropriate procedures have been followed and exhausted.

Handling Persistent Complaints or Vexatious Complaints

parkrun will consider the nature of any complaints against the above criteria to enable them to confirm the complaint is considered to be vexatious or persistent and will determine a course of action.

parkrun will try to resolve the issue by contacting the individual in writing to explain the difficulties and to set out a preferred method of behaviour for the parties involved. parkrun may decline further contact with the complainant or restrict contact to a specific format.

parkrun will notify the complainant in writing that the complaint has been fully responded to and there is nothing further to add; that continuing contact will serve no useful purpose and that further correspondence will be acknowledged but not answered.

The link to our complaints process can be found on [this page](#).

Appendix

Risk analysis matrix

	Highly Likely	Likely	Unlikely	No	Not enough information
Does the allegation, if proven, constitute a criminal offence?					
Is the behaviour towards multiple people?					
Could the behaviour occur in a parkrun environment?					
If the person is connected with juniors, does the behaviour involve children?					
Is there any potential reputational risk or media interest?					

Review

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically - every three years at least - to evaluate its effectiveness and implementation, taking advice from external specialist advisers where appropriate. Any improvements identified will be implemented as soon as practicable.

Version History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Updates
1.0	Head of Legal and Governance	July 2026	•