Stevenage and North Herts Athletics Club

Hardship Policy

August 2023

The club appreciates that from time to time club members and their families can experience financial hardship. As an inclusive, community club we would aim to support those in genuine need. This policy aims to set out when the club will offer support and what forms that support can take.

Eligibility

1. To be eligible for support the individual must be a member of Stevenage and North Herts AC or in a position where they wish to join the club.
2. Support is only available for first claim members, in the case of second claim members we would expect support to be provided by their first claim club.
3. Support would only be available to those who train on a regular basis (at least weekly) and compete / intend to compete for the club when appropriate (note this requirement does not apply to those in school years 4 and 5 or disability athletes).
4. Support can be given where the member or their family is in receipt of income related benefits (this does not include child benefit) or where the family have experienced an event, such as bereavement or marital breakdown, which places them under financial strain.
5. There may be occasions where a sudden large cost is incurred (for example the opportunity to compete internationally) and support may be needed. There is no automatic support from the club in these instances.
6. The club reserves the right to ask for proof of need if felt necessary.

Applying for support

1. Support can be requested by contacting the club’s chair, vice-chair, secretary or welfare officer Details of these post holders can be found on the website. Alternatively, you can speak to your / your child’s coach who can then speak to the committee on your behalf.
2. The club appreciates that requesting help can be a sensitive matter so we would encourage the applicant to speak to whoever they feel most comfortable speaking to.
3. The request for support can be made either verbally or in writing (letter or email).
4. When requesting support you need to give an indication of the following;
5. The grounds on which you believe you are eligible (linked to points 1 to 5 above). This can be a brief outline and we would never expect anyone to divulge detailed financial details.
6. What support you feel you require (see available support below).

Processing the request

1. Your request will be discussed by those referred to in point 1 under applying for support.
2. A decision will then be made on whether the club is able to provide support.
3. Those committee members making a decision may ask you for more information and may also speak to the relevant coaches.
4. You will then receive details of the decision made. We would always aim to do this within 14 days of your request.
5. If the club decides that it is unable to provide support this does not preclude you from making a further application at a later point.
6. If you wish to challenge the decision made this can be done within 28 days of you receiving the decision and should take the form of a written request to review the decision. This appeal should be made to the club president who will assess its merits with the support of other committee members who were not involved in the original decision.

What forms can support take?

There are many forms that support from the club can take and the list here is not intended to be exhaustive. Where the club is able to offer support the form it will take will always be discussed with the recipient to ensure it is appropriate.

Possible support includes;

A reduction in the annual membership fee or the agreement of a payment plan

Help with track fees

Support with essential equipment (clothing, footwear etc)

Support with entry fees for championships

Support with transport costs where the club is not providing coach transport

Responsibilities

The committee members will always assess each claim in a fair way and the expectation is that any request for support genuinely reflects the need of the member concerned. If the club becomes aware that an application was deliberately misleading, support can be stopped and the club reserves the right to ask for the return of support already provided.