

# **NFF NATIONAL TEAMS PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT 2013**

**(Draft provided by the Ministerial Panel on National Team Bonuses)**

## **PREAMBLE:**

The conduct of players who have been called up to represent Nigeria can have a significant impact on the reputation of the Nigeria National Teams, The NFF, Nigerian Football and Nigeria in general.

This document articulates the code of conduct for each player representing the nation at any level of sporting competition. They are based on the core principles of professionalism, patriotism, good behavior and responsible conduct.

The objectives of this code are to promote harmonious and professional relationship among all actors in the national team taking overall cognizance of FIFA code of ethics and all such other codes aimed at protecting the integrity of the game of football. This code seeks to provide the tools to manage and promote responsible citizenship and enhance the positive image of the Nigeria through sports.

While nothing in this code of conduct abridges or tamper with the rights of players as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, it is recognized however, that as members of the National team, players are ambassadors of the country and role models to younger citizens. This imposes additional responsibility that demands the highest level of good behavior and conduct from players at all times, but especially when on national assignments.

Accordingly, by accepting invitation to the National Team, Players shall be deemed to have accepted and agreed to abide by and adhere to the provisions and principles of this code of conduct in its entirety and the provisions of Section 24 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which states that:

***It shall be a duty of every citizen to:***

- a) abide by this constitution, respect its ideals and its institutions, the National Flag, the National Anthem, the National Pledge, and legitimate authorities;***
- b) help enhance the power, prestige and good name of Nigeria, defend Nigeria and render such National service as may be required;***
- c) respect the dignity of other citizens and the rights and legitimate interest of others and live in unity and harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood;***
- d) make positive and useful contribution to the advancement, progress and well-being of the community where he resides***

*e) render assistance to appropriate and lawful agencies in the maintenance of law and order; and*

*f) declare his income honestly to appropriate and lawful agencies and pay his tax promptly.*

In order to ensure that players are aware of the standards of conduct expected of them, the Nigeria Football Federation has implemented this code of conduct (the "Code") which applies to all players across all National Squads at all times. The Code is broken down into five parts:

**Part A: Standard of conduct required at all times;**

**Part B: National Team values while on international duty;**

**Part C: Allowances and Bonuses**

**Part D: NFF Obligations**

**Part E: Procedure in the event of an alleged breach of the Code.**

The Code may be updated from time to time at the discretion of the Nigeria Football Federation Executive Committee.

It is the duty of every player accepting invitation to the National team to familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities under this code.

**August 2013**

## **PART A: STANDARD OF CONDUCT REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES**

Players representing Nigeria are ambassadors for their country and role models for younger players. The highest standards of conduct and behaviour are therefore expected at all times, including when players are not on international duty. Players must:

- conduct themselves at all times according to stipulated principles and requirement of this code.
- not engage in any behaviour which has, or may have, an adverse impact on the reputation or integrity of The NFF, the relevant National team or the game in general;
- abide by NFF, CAF and FIFA Rules and Regulations at all times;
- not engage in the use (without proper prescription), supply, possession, administration or trafficking of any controlled substance as defined and prohibited by the relevant authorities and applicable laws;
- reject and oppose violence, abuse and all forms of discrimination; and
- not publish, or cause to be published (including on Twitter and Facebook and any other social media), anything that may cause offence or embarrass any member of The NFF, National squads or management. If you wish to publicly comment on any aspect of playing for Nigeria, including in books, newspaper columns, podcasts, vodcasts, diaries and any other online media services, including social networking sites, prior permission of The NFF Media Office is required.

Any player who is questioned, arrested or charged by the police in connection with a criminal offence should advise their respective National Coach/Team Coordinator/Team Secretary as soon as reasonably possible.

## **PART B: NATIONAL TEAMS VALUES WHILE ON INTERNATIONAL DUTY**

Players across all National squads should demonstrate the following common values when they are on international duty:

### **1. RESPECT**

Players and staff should show respect at all times, on and off the pitch. In particular, players should:

- respect opponents, officials and supporters;
- when travelling to foreign countries, be respectful of their culture and traditions;
- always acknowledge the supporters at the end of a game and on the coach travelling to training and games;
- respect CAF and FIFA officials at all times;
- respect drug testing officers post match; and
- respect hotel staff at all times.

### **2. PROFESSIONALISM**

Players should represent their country, on and off the pitch, with high standards of professionalism. In particular players should:

- whatever the level of provocation from the public, press and/or fans, should not react unguardedly;
- not react, however hard it is, to verbal provocation from the press or fans when in public places (journalist and photographers are allowed to follow players in public areas, it is not against the law and they are only doing their job);
- comply with directions and instructions from Team Management and obey individual team rules, including the rules on dress code, time management, feeding, use of mobile phones and other electronics equipment, movement in and out of camp, visitors, medical etc;
- inform the Medical Team of any injuries when you report for National duty, or which are sustained while you are on National duty.
- only wear official squad branded/supplied clothing during squad time, apart from footwear. This includes any headwear, sweat and headbands and skins. At times designated by the team management, players may be able to wear their own casual clothes, but this shall not be branded sportswear supplied by rival sportswear suppliers to the National team sponsor;

- not carry out personal endorsements when representing Nigeria during international squad time;
- participate in official activities with NFF sponsors and commercial partners as may be directed.
- not consume alcohol without the express permission of the manager;
- not use drugs or banned substances;
- not use any drugs or medications in camp of whatever nature without the express approval of the team doctor
- not use hotel room service. All meals should be in group and prescribed period;
- not bet on any football matches *in any competition they are involved in including personal betting on results of games involving the national team or other teams as well as individual performance in a game*. Players should report to Team Management if anybody is approached offering any inducement to influence the outcome of any game;
- only use a sensible amount of time playing video/computer games;
- note that mobile phones in meal room, dressing room and on the team bus is at the discretion of the Head Coach.
- not discuss team tactics/selection ahead of fixtures outside of the group;
- always be on time for team meetings and official engagements;
- not discuss or offer gifts, gratification or unusual favours to any member of the technical team, team management or the NFF.
- report any request for gifts, gratification or usual favours from any member of the technical team, team management or the NFF .
- not take any actions that may cause disaffection, division and or confusion within the team.

### 3. **COMMUNICATION**

- All media activity should be managed and co-ordinated by The National Team Media officer and or the NFF Media Office;

- All players should play their part in meeting the demands on the squad with media activity. Tournament organizers often insist on a media conference involving some player activity every day;
- Where required by tournament organizers, players shall walk through media mixed zones after training at stadiums and after every match. Players should not wear electronic gadgets including ear phones while in mixed zones;
- Any player on Twitter or Facebook should liaise with the National Team Media Officer and or NFF Press Officer(s) for guidance. Do not criticize tournament organizers, referees, other players, fans, or nations;
- No Twitter or Facebook comments the day before and day of matches, unless authorized by the Head Coach and the Team Media Officer;
- No Twitter or social media disclosing team or injuries the day before or on the day of the match;
- No exclusive media columns or blogs;
- Be aware that texts, picture messages, BBM can easily become public very quickly so do not send anything that might embarrass the Team;
- Negative comments, criticism or complaint on the media, press or social networks on any issues related to team management, selection, welfare is prohibited;
- Any comment in the media that is likely to cause embarrassment to or lower the reputation and integrity of the team, team management, the Federation or the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is prohibited; and
- Players should desist from making any comments that could be political in nature.

## **PART C: ALLOWANCES AND BONUSES**

Allowances and bonuses for Players across all National squads should be structured and administered in line to the following:

- All national team players must respect structured allowances and bonuses;
- Payment structure for allowances and bonuses as well as flights and accommodation entitlement shall be determined by the NFF at the beginning of every year of engagement in consideration of the competitions/tournaments at hand and the financial standing of the Federation. All prospective players in the National teams shall be informed of this payment structure and entitlements accordingly. It must be noted that once these are agreed at the beginning of the year, they should not be subjected to negotiation or review until the beginning of another year;
- Players are to provide Bank account numbers and details for payment of allowances and bonuses or any other such entitlements. With the exception of daily camp allowances under no circumstances will cash payments be made;
- All payments due to the players shall be paid to their respective accounts within 7 days of becoming due.
- Players should not discuss or attempt to negotiate matters of allowances and bonuses while in camp.
- The NFF shall ensure and support the players to open a mandatory retirement benefit account in line to the NFF directives/by laws where a part of the match bonuses due shall always be paid as savings for the player for the future;
- Players are not entitled to any share of participation fees from Governing bodies of football paid to national associations.
- All grievances by players, including allowances and bonus related grievances by players are to be channeled through the team captain to the Team Secretary who will then write to the office of the General Secretary of the NFF accordingly.

## **PART D: OBLIGATIONS OF THE NFF**

The NFF shall ensure it efficiently and effectively meets its statutory duties at all times in the management and administration of the national teams. The NFF shall meet its obligations to the players, which shall include but not be limited to:

- informing the player and his club about any engagement in line to FIFA requirements and in good time;
- paying for and making complete arrangements for the transportation of the Player from his base to the camp;
- providing good boarding in a conducive environment for team members. All players must stay in the same camp;
- making reasonable efforts to always pay players allowances and entitlements within a maximum of 7 days of becoming due;
- ensuring to always provide a conducive environment for the Players to avoid boredom, distractions and indiscipline;
- providing good and adequate transportation for the team and its handlers to reflect their respected national status;
- providing the players with full details of their return to various clubs;
- keeping proper records of a player's participation in matches for the National teams;
- providing comprehensive insurance cover for the team and its officials for every engagement against accidents both off and on the field and in case of disability or death;
- only be obliged to indemnify a player or official to a reasonable degree in the case of property loss whilst in camp. Provided it is established that it is not due to the negligence of the persons concerned and they have complied with all relevant rules;
- striving to always ensure the safety and guarantee the security and welfare of the team members;
- striving to always protect, support, guide and encourage the national team players;
- ensuring all its appointed technical team, officials and delegates treat the players with respect and dignity at all times; and



- ensure the appropriate enforcement and application of the provisions of the code.

## **PART E: PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE**

### **General**

Breach of any of the requirements of this Code by any player, acting on behalf of himself or others, individually or as a group shall attract appropriate sanction as provided in this code.

The NFF Technical Committee or the authorized Team Management shall have jurisdiction to determine all issues arising under the Code, including in respect of any alleged breaches.

This jurisdiction shall operate separately to any disciplinary process under NFF, CAF or FIFA Rules and Regulations.

### **Process to be followed**

1. Where it is alleged that a player has breached the Code, the matter shall be investigated by members of the Team Management or NFF Technical Committee or their delegates.
2. All players shall, where requested, assist with any investigation.
3. Following the investigation, where there is evidence that there may have been a breach of the Code, the Team Management or the NFF Technical Committee shall (subject to paragraph 6 below) convene a meeting to determine whether the Code has been breached. The procedure to be adopted for this meeting shall be determined by the Chairman of the NFF Technical Committee or the Head of the Team Management.
4. In the event that it is determined that there has been a breach of the Code, the measures open to the NFF Technical Committee or the Team Management shall include:
  - 4.1 issuing an oral or written warning to the player, reprimand, fine, return of awards, ban from dressing room and/or substitutes bench, ban on entering stadium, ban on taking part in any football related activity; and/or
  - 4.2 determining that the player shall not be eligible for selection for a specific number of matches or for a specific period; and/or
  - 4.3 determining that the player shall not be eligible for selection for an indefinite period.
5. For the avoidance of doubt, the NFF Technical Committee or the head of the Team Management may determine that any measures applied under paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 above shall also apply to the eligibility of the player for selection as Captain.

6. Where an allegation of serious misconduct has been made, the NFF Technical Committee or the head of the Team Management may suspend a player while the matter is investigated further and/or pending the outcome of any football regulatory or criminal investigation. The suspension may also, at the discretion of the NFF Technical Committee or the head of the Team Management, apply solely to the eligibility of the player for selection as Captain.
7. Serious misconduct will normally result in a decision that the player shall not be eligible for selection for a length of time to be determined by the NFF Technical Committee. Serious misconduct includes but is not limited to:
  - 7.1 theft, dishonesty, fraud, deliberate falsification of records;
  - 7.2 assault, battery or other offences involving violence, deliberate damage to or misuse of federation or team property;
  - 7.3 willful breach of safety/security regulations or policies;
  - 7.4 deliberate damage to or misuse of NFF or team property;
  - 7.5 being drunk or intoxicated under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
  - 7.6 any form of discrimination based on religion, region, tribe or social status;
  - 7.7 causing divisions or disunity in camp;
  - 7.8 deliberate misuse of confidential information;
  - 7.9 a serious breach of NFF Rules and Regulations;
  - 7.10 offering or giving of gratification to team officials or NFF officers;
  - 7.11 not disclosing/reporting attempts to solicit for or request for gratification from any team official or NFF officers;
  - 7.12 flagrant disobedience to team management or head coach directives and
  - 7.13 any conduct, which has a significant, and material adverse impact on the reputation or integrity of The NFF, the relevant National team, the game or the Country in general.
8. Any decision of the NFF Technical Committee or the head of the Team Management is final, and there shall be no right of appeal.
9. The NFF shall have the power to publish in the press, on a web site or in any other manner considered appropriate, reports of any decision reached by the NFF Technical Committee.

## **National Team Captaincy**

The position of National Team Captain is a privileged position, which carries with it additional expectations and responsibility (both on and off the field). The Captain of each team is therefore under increased scrutiny and is expected to be a role model to the rest of the squad in his/her compliance with the Code. The Captaincy may be removed from a player by the NFF Technical Committee or the head of the Team Management in the event that his/her conduct does not meet the standards required for this role.

The Head Coach retains the right to change the captaincy irrespective of any breaches of the code of conduct.