

County Panel's Subcommittee & Player's Charter

This revised template Charter and accompanying guidelines are a key part of the agreed relationship between the GAA and its intercounty players' body, the GPA. It deliberately sets out proven processes and practices that will enable counties and players to fulfil their obligations and meet their needs in an open and co-operative manner with the overall core objectives of maximising the opportunity for success within a county as well as avoiding unnecessary conflicts and distractions for all parties to the greatest degree possible.

The County Teams Management and Panel's Subcommittee, and Player's Charter, are vital elements in managing a healthy relationship between the administration and inter county players in a given county (See Riail 3.20 (xiii), T.O 2016). The subcommittee should include the County Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, the relevant Senior Team Manager and the relevant panel's two GPA reps. It is recommended that the Panel Liaison person for the panel is also included (if he is not one of the three main officers already identified).

The Guidelines for players, detailed in Section 3 of this document, in terms of expenses, gear, tickets and other provisions should be the default position in a county **unless** more appropriate local arrangements are reached and agreed on by all parties. As a guiding principle, Officials, Managers and players are encouraged to explore arrangements that can minimise wastage and maximise the positive effects of the overall spend on the County panel.

The subcommittee should meet in November or December each year and the Charter should be agreed no later than December 15th annually. The Charter should give appropriate consideration to the available resources within a county and balancing these with the needs of its County players in striving to achieve their goals. Each heading should be discussed annually and an agreed position reached and included in the Charter for the year ahead.

It is recognised that there are three distinct periods in the lifetime of any panel

- The "pre-league" panel (from the commencement of training to mid-January)
- The League Panel (from commencement of League)
- The Championship Panel (post May 1st)

The completed Charter should be circulated to all players on the Panel by either a member of the Team management or a players' representative.

The person responsible for this is: _____

Annual Function of County Panel's Sub-Committee:

- Hold at least one meeting before December 15th each year.
- Ensure the Charter is submitted to Central Council before January 31st each year
- To oversee the process ensuring all valid expense claims are processed on time and in full
- Hold other meetings throughout the year as requested by the County Committee or Players Reps to discuss relevant matters as they arise; it is recommended a review meeting is held prior to the commencement of the championship.
- Should meet as required to consider disputes or contentious issues concerning players (see escalation process in the Appendices to this document)
- Hold an end of year review meeting within a month of elimination from the Championship

2. PLAYERS CHARTER

COUNTY:

CODE:

Section 1 – County Panel’s Sub-Committee

Membership

(1) County Chairperson

(2) County Treasurer

(3) County Secretary (or nominee)

(4) Team Manager

(5) Player Representative

(6) Player Representative

(7) Panel Liaison Officer

Frequency of meetings:

Section 2 – Agreed Policy on Expenses

Please see detailed Central Council Expense Policy in the Notes for Completion of Charter

Mileage Rates:

Submission of Expenses (how, when & to whom expenses should be submitted):

Payment of Expenses (how & when expenses will be paid):

Section 3 – Agreed Policy on Gym & Pool Recovery Facilities

Gym Arrangements:

Pool/Rehab Arrangements:

Other:

Section 4 – Agreed Policy on Provision of Playing & Training Gear

Please See Central Council Guidelines in the Notes for Completion of Charter

(i) Pre-League Panel

(ii) League Panel

(iii) Championship Panel

Arrangements for Provision of Footwear (Boots, Runners) or reimbursement policy:

Other:

Section 5 – Agreed Policy on Match Tickets

National Leagues:

Provincial Championships

All Ireland Series

Section 6 – Agreed Procedures for Injuries and Treatment

Team Doctor(s):

Team Physio(s):

Injury Scheme Claims Procedure:

Other:

Section 7 – Agreed Policy on Meals & Nutrition

MEALS:

Post Training:

Match Day:

Nutrition:

Section 8 – Anti-Doping

The person with responsibility for Anti-Doping Education for this panel is:

Anti-Doping awareness education seminars are available to all intercounty panels – further information available from gearoid.devitt@gaa.ie

It is recommended that all players complete the Anti-Doping e-learning course on www.learning.gaa.ie.

Eligibility for the Government Eligible Expenses scheme is conditional on compliance with Anti-Doping policies and the Irish Anti-Doping Rules as set out at <http://www.sportireland.ie/Anti-Doping/>.

Under these Rules, players are strictly responsible for any prohibited substance found in their body

Section 9 – Duties to Team/County Sponsors Fundraising etc.

The Team Sponsors are:

Wearing of Official Team Gear:

Media Nights:

Fundraising:

Section 10 – Panel Numbers & Player Availability to Clubs

PANEL NUMBERS:

What is the agreed number of players on the pre-league county training panel:

What is the agreed number of players on the training panel for the National Leagues?

What is the agreed number of players on the training panel for the Championship?

On what date will the training panel for the Championship be finalised?

What arrangements are in place for players who are on the training panel but who are outside the 26 allowed in the official party for all National League and Championship games?

(a) Please confirm that players not on the match day 26 will be released to play with their clubs on weekends of League & Championship games [see Rule 6.22 (d)]?

(b) If travelling to games, how will they be accommodated?

Any other relevant items?

PLAYER AVAILABILITY TO CLUBS:

In order to ensure that clubs get fair and reasonable access to players involved with inter-county panels, list below dates when players shall be available for Club Competitions or club training.

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

Other:

Section 12 – Disputes & Signatures

All parties agree that should disagreements in relation to this Charter or any other matters pertaining to the County team arise, they should be referred to the County Panels Sub-Committee and addressed by this body in the first instance.

SIGNED:

County Chairperson

County Treasurer

County Secretary (or nominee)

Team Manager

Player Representative

Player Representative

Panel Liaison Officer

DATE:

3. Notes for Completion of Charter for County Committee/Player Relationships (“Player’s Charter”)

(Including Agreed Central Council Guidelines on Expenses, Gear, Tickets, Food etc.)

Section 1 – County Panel’s Sub-Committee and Inter County Management Team Responsibilities

Membership - In this Section please list the members of the County Panels subcommittee.

The Sub-Committee should consist of the County Chairman, the County Treasurer and the County Secretary, the County Team Manager, two player Reps and the Panel Liaison Officer.

Panel Liaison Officer

The Panel Liaison Officer should be agreed in advance by the County Officers and Team Management.

Inter County Management and Backroom Team

This section should list all members of the County management team and backroom personnel and their responsibilities

Section 2 – Expenses Policy

Players are entitled to claim for travel costs and re-imburement of out-of pocket expenses incurred by virtue of their membership of the inter-county panel.

The provisions set out below are subject to

1. Compliance with Revenue Commissioner/Inland Revenue guidelines and requirements
2. Local variation, provided such variation is agreed in advance and evidenced by both player panels and county committee

a) What expenses can be claimed?

Travel (*claimable from return to training date – Riail R. 6.45 T.O. 2016 - to Championship exit*)

- Players are entitled to claim travel expenses in respect of travel to training, matches and pre-approved gym sessions and pre-approved medical appointments.
- For the purpose of calculating mileage the distance travelled is calculated as the lesser of:
 - Player's home to training
 - Player's workplace/college to training
- In the case of a player living outside the county from Monday to Thursday his "home" address is considered to be his home outside the county and from Friday to Sunday his base within the county. In cases where travel is undertaken solely for team-related activities, the Friday "home" address may be considered the address outside the County
- Any player required to travel for medical appointments as prescribed by team management is permitted to claim expenses
- Other notional bases (distance from club etc) should not be used
- Where the county provides coach or other transportation to training/matches players are expected to use this facility wherever possible
- Mileage will not be payable for individual car travel where group transport is provided but not availed of, except by prior agreement
- Players may claim for travel to a collection point for onward bus transportation
- Mileage is payable at a rate not in excess of 65c per mile (sterling equivalent to be confirmed)
- For cars with engine sizes below 1200cc mileage is payable at 63c per mile
- Tiered mileage rates to incentivise car-pooling are permitted, subject to the above limit
- Standard mileage is payable only in respect of journeys undertaken in a player's own car
- In the case of players using sponsored cars, if all motoring costs are borne by the car provider GAA mileage is not payable
- Where some of the costs are borne by the player reduced mileage is payable – see appendix
- Other out-of-pocket travel costs such as bus, train, tolls etc are re-claimable on a vouched basis

Food Expenses (*claimable from return to training date – Riail R. 6.45 - to Championship exit*)

- Players may claim re-imburement for out-of-pocket food expenditure on a vouched basis
- Claims should only be made for food or drink items generally considered to have a positive nutritional benefit
- Such claims are subject to a maximum of €20 week (sterling equivalent to be confirmed)
- Claims should be made by calendar month using the same expense form referenced below (see Appendix) and shall be accompanied by receipts
- Expenses incurred but not claimed in a particular month can be claimed subsequently, but if expenditure has not been incurred to the refundable amount, the balance cannot be used to augment a subsequent month's payment

In general, any expenses other than those specified in the Players Charter can only be claimed and re-imbursed if agreed in advance with the relevant officer and Player Rep before being incurred.

b) How are expenses to be claimed?

- The GAA intends to automate the expense submission, approval and payment process by 1st January 2018, with the co-operation of county committees, players and the GPA. Save in exceptional circumstances to be agreed between the County Secretary/Treasurer and a player, all expenses claims should be made via the GAA's automated expenses claim system. In these exceptional circumstances a standard approved form will be used.
- Receipts for any of out-of-pocket expenditure claimed must be attached electronically in the expense claim system / app.
- All claims must be completed in full and arithmetically correct.
- Expenses claims must be approved by the Panel Liaison Officer and County Treasurer prior to payment
- Claims should be submitted by players on a monthly basis by the 15th of the following month
- Claims submitted on time should be paid by the 15th of the month after submission
- Where monies are owed by a player to the county, the county has the right to deduct such balances from expense payments
- The County should not wait until all panel expense claims have been received/approved before initiating payment
- Expenses will be paid electronically save in exceptional circumstances to be agreed with the player(s) by the County Secretary / Treasurer.
- County committee should report to Central Council monthly on total value of expense claims received/payable and paid

c) What happens in the event of a dispute?

- Issues regarding expense payments, whether on the part of players or the County, should be resolved locally wherever possible
- Queries on specific expense claims should be raised by the Treasurer directly with the individual player
- Disallowed items/claims should be communicated to the player within 7 days of the would-be payment date
- In the event of significant anticipated difficulties with payment due to cash flow difficulties the county should or may request short term cash flow assistance from Central Council to facilitate timely payment
- A county in wilful breach of the provisions or spirit of the expense policy will be accountable to National Finance Committee
- Similarly if a player knowingly submits a falsified expense claim, that claim will not be payable in its entirety, and the issue will be referred to the GAA/GPA Charter Review Group
- Disputes that are not capable of local resolution will be subject to the escalation process agreed by GAA/GPA for charter disputes in general

Appendix re Sponsored cars

- Where full motor costs are borne by car provider – no GAA mileage is payable
- Where fuel costs only are borne by the player, mileage is payable at 10c per mile
- Where fuel and maintenance costs are borne by the player, mileage is payable at 20c per mile

Section 3 – Policy on Gym & Pool Recovery facilities

Agreement should be included in the Charter for Gym or other facilities which are acceptable to the panel and management for individual training programmes/recovery which may be required.

Gym facilities can be provided through either a dedicated county facility or the provision of access to agreed private gym facility or selection of gyms in locations which will cause the minimum amount of disruption to player's personal circumstances and should be available, as a minimum, from the commencement of training until the team's exit from the relevant championship.

If necessary, times for access to a county's gym facilities should be specified in the Players Charter.

As a general principle, players should not be out of pocket for Gym sessions required by their team management, *specific details of which should be included in the Charter*

It is the responsibility of team management to agree and arrange with the County Committee for appropriate Pool facilities to be provided for group or individual rehab and recovery sessions. Any ongoing arrangements or policies in this respect should be stated in Section 3 of the Charter.

Section 4 – Policy on provision of Playing & Training gear

In this section, please list your county's agreed policy on the provision of Playing and Training Gear

It is also important to specify target delivery dates for WHEN such gear will be distributed for the League Panel and WHEN for the Championship panel, as well as what arrangements will be in place for the pre-league panel.

Central Council guidelines with regard to minimum provisions in this respect are detailed below – ***each heading should be discussed annually by the County Panel Subcommittee and an agreed position reached having given consideration to available budgets etc.*** If agreement cannot be reached, then the provisions outlined below, as agreed by Central Council, should pertain

Training, Playing & Leisure wear – Minimum Provisions

(for teams participating in the Sam Maguire, Liam Mac Carthy, Tier 2 and Christy Ring Cups)

- a) As a core principle, it is important that players have adequate levels of gear to ensure proper preparation and effective team identity.
- b) Gear should be provided to all players on the panel as agreed between the County Committee & Team Management
- c) Buying/Sourcing Gear is the sole responsibility of the County Committee
- d) New panellists should receive gear appropriate to the stage at which they join the panel

Pre-League:

Each county to have generic training gear (retained by County, washed and distributed to players nightly) to include: togs, socks, training tops and windcheaters.

or

Where generic training gear is not provided and managed by the county for the pre-league panel, it is the responsibility of the County Committee to ensure each player involved is provided with:

- 2 x pairs Training Socks and Shorts
- 3 x Training T-Shirts
- 1 x Gym Shorts
- 1 x Training Wet Suit (if not already received previous year or no longer useable from wear/tear)

League

Each County to provide for players on the league panel a minimum of:

- Half Zip Top
- T Shirt or Polo Shirt
- Skinny Pants or Tracksuit bottoms
- Jacket or Gillet (if not already provided the previous year or no longer useable from wear/tear)

Any item above may be swapped by agreement for a different garment

Championship

In addition to the above, for those on the Championship Panel (i.e. post May 1st), each County to provide a minimum of:

Training Top, Shorts and socks

Travel Shorts

Other (league and championship)

Kit bags – Counties to make sure every player has a kit bag (replace as required)

Match Day Socks and Shorts – to be provided to all players

Gloves – to be provided to all players

Goalkeeper Gloves – 2 pairs from start of league (reimbursable expense up to €80 per pair)

Hurleys and Helmets – should be replaced when broken

Jerseys - *Players can retain their jerseys after their last match in the Championship or league finals*

Footwear – Counties should reach local agreement with players on the provision of footwear (3 items per year) giving consideration to sponsorship deals, local suppliers etc.; where this is not possible, Counties should reimburse the vouched cost of footwear to at least €375 per player p/a. Where Counties are providing footwear directly to players, the first two items should be received by the panel no later than Feb 15th and the third item by the panel no later than May 1st.

The agreed arrangements on footwear should be specified in the Charter.

It should be emphasised that all of the above are minimum requirements only. Counties may decide to provide all of the gear above at the start of the year in consultation with their players.

In order to maximise available budgets, consideration should be given when considering certain items listed above (e.g. Wet gear, Jackets etc) to ensuring all players are in possession of these items, rather than necessarily replacing them for the entire panel each year. This should be particularly relevant where there is no change of sponsor in a given year.

Minimum Provisions for teams participating in the Rackard/Meagher Cups:

Pre- League panel (as above)

League and Championship

- Half Zip Top
- T Shirt or Polo Shirt
- Skinny Pants or Tracksuit bottoms
- Jacket or Gillet (if not already provided the previous year or no longer useable from wear/tear)

Footwear – Counties should reach local agreement with players on the provision of footwear (2 items per year) giving consideration to sponsorship deals, local suppliers etc.; where this is not possible, Counties should reimburse the vouched cost of footwear to at least €250 per player p/a. Where Counties are providing footwear directly to players, the first item should be received no later than February 15th and the second item no later than May 1st
The agreed arrangements on footwear should be specified in the Charter.

Players can retain their jerseys after their last match in the Championship or after league finals

Section 5 – Policy on Match Tickets

In this section please state the agreed policy on match tickets. The numbers of tickets which will be provided for League and Championship games as per Central Council policy are stated below.

When completing the Charter it is important to state how and when tickets will be distributed to players for the below competitions.

The organising authority (i.e. Provincial or Central Council as appropriate) will provide complimentary tickets on a per panel basis and for player use only as follows:

Allianz Leagues – 105 passes per panel

League Semi-Finalists & Finalists – 200 stand tickets per panel

Provincial Championships – 140 stand tickets per panel

Provincial Finalists – 200 stand tickets per panel

Ring/Rackard/Meagher Cup games – 140 stand tickets per panel

Ring/Rackard/Meagher Cup Finals – 200 stand tickets per panel

Qualifiers (Rds 1 – 4) – 140 stand tickets per panel

All Ireland Quarter Finalists/Semi-Finalists – 200 stand tickets per panel

All Ireland Finals (non-competing Counties) – 60 tickets per panel to purchase for personal use

All Ireland Finals (Competing Counties) - 360 Complimentary Stand tickets per panel, 120 Stand tickets to purchase, 120 terrace tickets to purchase

Section 6 - Procedures in relation to Injuries and Treatment

In this section please state the County's lead medics (Doctor and Physio) and the general policy in relation to Injuries and other treatments. This can outline:

- (i) How injuries are reported/recorded to ensure reimbursement under the player injury scheme;
- (ii) Who will sign off on any treatment required outside that which can be provided by the County's own medical team
- (iii) Provisions for a weekly update to county secretary / panel liaison officer on injury status by the medical team
- (iv) Any other issues of relevance to a specific County

It is general practice in most Counties that any additional costs incurred for treatment by medical personnel outside of this will only be covered by the County Committee if the treatment in question is agreed in advance, prescribed by the County Team Doctor/Physio and approximate costs agreed in consultation with the Panel liaison Officer.

Each County should ensure an appropriate recording mechanism is in place for such instances.

Section 7 - Policy on Meals & Nutrition

Meals:

In this section please state what the policy on meals (post training and games) is, i.e. what the County Committee will provide (e.g. outside catering in dressing room, hotel or restaurant, voucher system and so on).

This may be as simple as saying it will be as agreed between the Team Management and Panel Liaison Officer on a game by game or month by month basis) and that digression from the policy should only be as per any agreement between the manager & Liaison Officer

Central Council Guidelines for food provided for players after training and matches state that:

- *All meals should be provided in accordance with overall team nutritional plan as agreed with team nutritionist*
- *Hot meals to be provided after each field session & game (unless otherwise agreed between Team Management/Players)*
- *Alternatively, and by agreement, Players can be provided with take away meals after each training session*
- *Meals should be provided in an appropriate and agreed facility*

Nutrition

Under this heading please state the agreed Team Management policy on supplemental and recovery nutritional items.

As a general principle, panels should have access to a qualified nutritionist and players should be following an agreed nutritional plan (*this does not necessarily mean a nutritionist is required as part of the official backroom team*). The charter should state who is fulfilling this role.

It is the responsibility of the Team Management, liaising with the County Committee, to ensure items required by them in this context (eg. Recovery drinks, protein, vitamins, fish oils etc) are sourced & provided for players if prescribed by Team Management (these do not form part of the Player Food/Nutrition Allowance)

Section 8 – Anti-Doping Education

This section should include the name of the person with responsibility for Anti-Doping Education (i.e. the person within the panel responsible for ensuring players receive appropriate information on Anti-Doping prior to commencement of collective training).

It is recommended that all players complete the Anti-Doping e-learning course on www.learning.gaa.ie.

Anti-Doping education resources and materials, or awareness education seminars can be organised on request from the GAA (gearoid.devitt@gaa.ie)

Section 9 - Duties to Sponsors etc.

In this section please list the Sponsors of the County team and outline what is expected of players in relation to the Team or County Sponsors and in terms of fundraising activities. This could include:

- a) Official team leisure gear should be worn to all matches
- b) Official team leisure gear should be worn at all Media Press Nights & where possible when interviews are being given away from matches/training
- c) Players and team management will endeavour, within reason, to co-operate with media requests for interviews where possible and when appropriate.
- d) Players to show reasonable co-operation with County Fundraising activities, to attend at launches etc (these can be listed if known in advance)

Section 10 – Panel numbers and availability to clubs

This section should include the relevant information from the Team Managers Charter in relation to player panel numbers, arrangements for players outside of the match-day 26 and availability of players to their clubs.

Section 11 – Miscellaneous Arrangements

In this section please state any relevant miscellaneous arrangements that have been agreed between the County Committee, Team Management and Players Reps.

For example Central Council strongly recommends that these might include:

- The provision of a welcome pack for new players joining the panel after the season has commenced (a welcome pack might contain a copy of the agreed charter, basic information on anti-doping and anything else considered useful and relevant)
- Arrangements in advance for overnight stays/team travel (i.e. which games the Team Management and County Committee have agreed to travel overnight for in the Allianz Leagues or Championships)

Overview

Below are beginning and end of year check lists for your County Panel's Subcommittee that will help to ensure relevant items have been completed.

Beginning of Year Check List for County Panel's Committee

Before briefing the County Panel at the beginning of the year, the Panel's Committee should ensure that the following has been agreed by the committee and addressed in the County Panels Charter for the year as appropriate:

1. A liaison officer has been appointed
2. Player reps have been agreed and identified
3. Procedures for claiming expenses have been agreed.
4. Policy on individual training programmes & facilities agreed
5. Gear/ticket provisions are agreed
6. Procedures in relation to injuries and treatment are outlined and agreed
7. There is an agreed policy on meals and nutrition
8. Duties to Sponsors outlined & list of team sponsors prepared
9. Anti-Doping Procedures are outlined and education plan agreed
10. Procedures in relation to disputes are understood

End of Year Check List for County Panel's Committee

At the conclusion of each year, the County Panel's Committee should hold a final "de-briefing" meeting at which any areas of concern should be highlighted. The Committee should seek any relevant opinions/feedback on the items listed below.

1. Procedures for claiming expenses

2. Policy on individual training programmes & facilities

3. Gear/ticket provisions

4. Policy on swapping jerseys etc

5. Procedures in relation to injuries and treatment

6. Policy on post-match and training meals

7. Duties to Sponsors

8. Anti-Doping Procedures

Appendix 1

INSERT STANDARD EXPENSE CLAIM FORM

Appendix 2 – Review Group and Protocol for issues arising from Player’s Charter

A Charter Review group will be established the primary focus of which is to provide a collaborative approach by both the GAA and the GPA to review, monitor progress and amend where appropriate the County panels subcommittee & players charter.

Protocol for issues arising from Player’s Charter

1. Individual player has an issue. Should report it to the Player Rep. This issue may already be known to the Player Rep. Rep is either able to deal with it there and then or.....
2. Player Rep should make contact with the Panel Liaison Officer. If he /she needs to speak to someone else about the issue (e.g. County Secretary or Treasurer, Gear suppliers etc), he should give the Rep an indication of when he hopes to revert to him on the matter.
3. If the Rep is not satisfied with the outcome of this, he should request a meeting of the County Panel’s Sub-Committee. While this may be done verbally, it is suggested it should be done by email also (copying all the members of the County Panel’s Sub-Committee). A note should be kept of this meeting and of any action points or issues that remained unresolved at its conclusion.
4. Unless by agreement with the Player’s Rep, if this meeting is not held within 7 days of the request being made, or if the matter is not sorted out to the Rep or player’s satisfaction, the GPA rep should contact his GPA Development Officer. The Development Officer should contact Gearoid Devitt in the Games Administration Dept by email, outlining the issues from the players’ perspective and confirming that a meeting of the County Panel’s Subcommittee has been unsuccessful (or that a request to hold one has not been acted upon)
5. Gearoid Devitt will decide next required step from a GAA perspective, depending on the nature of the issue(s). It is the GAA’s obligation to return contact within 3 working days with a proposal for resolution to the GPA Development Officer and to suggest what steps need to be taken for same.
6. If the matter(s) remain unresolved after the 5 steps above have been completed, the GAA’s Director of Player, Club & Games Administration and the CEO of the GPA will facilitate a meeting between the Player Reps and County officers.