



New Zealand Handball Coach Appointment Policy 2023

New Zealand Handball | Coach Appointment Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Application

The appointment policy and procedures outlined in this document (**Policy**) apply to the process for the appointment of head coach, assistant coach and lead team manager roles for all New Zealand Handball squads (Men and Women, Junior and Youth, Beach and Indoor) taking part in any High-Performance campaign recognised and supported by the NZHF Board.

1.2. Responsibility

1.2.1 The New Zealand Handball Appointments Panel (**Panel**) is responsible for the application of this Policy and due process.

1.2.2 The Panel is made up of the High-Performance Director, Secretary-General, President and (optionally) for any particular appointment process one other person chosen by the NZHF Board in accordance with this Policy for the additional skill set or experience they provide and/or to ensure the panel responsible for any particular appointment comprises at least three people.

1.2.3 The Panel is accountable to the NZHF Board for the effectiveness of this Policy and fairness of its application, directly reporting to the Board's nominee for this purpose.

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1 The primary objective of this Policy is the appointment of the best available coaching and managerial group for every New Zealand Handball High-Performance squad.

1.3.2 'Best' in this context does not necessarily mean the most qualified or experienced person for the role, but also takes into account the need for any appointee to be an effective communicator, to develop rapport, and to generate enthusiasm amongst the relevant squad. It requires a balancing act between the desire for short term success, long term success, and player engagement.

1.3.3 'Available' may take into account future availability, with interim or short-term appointments or arrangements appropriate where it is reasonably anticipated that the optimal coaching resource will become available at a future point in time.

1.3.4 The secondary objectives are to deepen New Zealand's Handball coaching pool and to encourage players to want to commit to our High-Performance squads.

1.3.5 Each national representative squad should have a person appointed to the position of head coach of that squad at all times, or a clear pathway and plan for the appointment of a head coach, to ensure there is a clear direction for each squad.

1.4. Principles

The application and review of the Policy outlined in this document should have regard to the following principles:

1.4.1 Transparency for all stakeholders who are involved in the appointment process.

1.4.2 Improved communication and understanding between stakeholders.

1.4.3 Improved planning and execution associated with all aspects of the appointment process.

1.4.4 Flexibility to respond to applicable circumstances and dynamics to ensure the appointment process operates in the best interests of New Zealand Handball.

1.4.5 Facilitation of analysis and review of the appointment process to ensure quality, consistency, and stability.

2. PANEL OPERATION

- 2.1** Where a member of the Panel wishes to apply for a role the Panel is considering, or otherwise has a clear conflict of interest in an appointment (e.g. the member's partner or a member of the person's immediate family is one of the candidates) that person shall be excluded from the relevant appointment process.
- 2.2** Unless excluded by clause 2.1, the High-Performance Director shall chair the deliberations of the Panel and coordinate the relevant process. If excluded from a particular appointment process, the Panel shall determine which of its number shall take on that function.
- 2.3** The Panel alone is responsible for the appointment of head coach and any assistant coaches for any national representative squad.
- 2.4** Appointments of the official manager and assistant coach(es) for any national representative squad shall be undertaken by the Panel plus the head coach appointed for that squad, using either the process outlined at section 3 of this Policy or an alternative approach agreed between them (which could involve an uncontested shoulder-tap appointment). It is then up to the appointed manager and coaching group to determine the optimal management structure for that squad, and to make further appointments as they see fit. When this Policy refers to the 'Panel' in the context of the appointment of a squad manager or assistant coach, it means the Panel plus the relevant head coach.
- 2.5** Decisions of the Panel shall be made by majority vote.

3. APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Each appointment process must follow the process described in this section, noting that clause 3.10 overrides clauses 3.1-3.9:

- 3.1** Before any appointment process commences, the Panel shall agree on the criteria and term of appointment they are looking to make, and the timeframe within which the appointment process shall be carried out.
- 3.2** A formal call for expressions of interest ('EOI') shall be made at the start of each appointment process. That EOI must be published on the NZHF website and publicised on such social media platforms and at such time as the Panel sees fit, working in collaboration with the NZHF Media Officer. The EOI must follow the prescribed form approved from time to time by the NZHF Board.
- 3.3** While it is in order for members of the Panel to 'shoulder tap' candidates to respond to any EOI, each EOI must be objectively run with the Panel taking an open mind to assessing all responses received.
- 3.4** Each EOI must be open for responses for at least one month, unless extenuating circumstances require a shorter period (e.g. the incumbent coach resigns suddenly at a time when there is a pressing need to make a permanent replacement appointment).
- 3.5** EOIs must be acknowledged within one week of receipt.

- 3.6 EOIs are not required for interim appointments made pending a permanent appointment, although the Panel must still endeavour to give thought to the range of possible candidates before making an interim appointment, and avoid interim appointments becoming de facto permanent appointments not supported by an EOI process.
- 3.7 Once the EOI process has closed, the Panel shall get together (physically or virtually) to assess responses received and make a determination, following such process as they see fit. That process may include arranging interviews with short-listed candidates and/or seeking references or input from third parties, but the Panel shall also be entitled to proceed to the appointment stage solely based on the responses received.
- 3.8 Feedback must be provided to each unsuccessful candidate once the successful candidate has accepted their appointment. That feedback shall be encouraging and respectful, as well as honest, with the objective of ensuring the candidate is clear as to what they would need to do in order to be successful next time they apply.
- 3.9 Unless otherwise agreed by the NZHF Board, all appointments are unpaid voluntary roles, with appointees to be advised of the arrangements that will be made to cover their reasonable out of pocket expenses and travelling costs either in the EOI or at the time of appointment.
- 3.10 If the Panel is satisfied that a suitable quality candidate will be available for the role of head coach for any national squad at an upcoming international tournament, the Panel may proceed to appoint that candidate to the role without issuing an EOI or following the process outlined above. If that occurs, the Panel shall approve such interim arrangements for the proper training and coordination of the relevant squad as it sees fit.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- 4.1 All members of the Panel are required to maintain the confidentiality of all information received as part of each appointment process, as well as the confidentiality of their deliberations (subject to clause 3.8) and communications with applicants (**Confidential Information**). That confidentiality extends to the names of individuals who have responded to EOIs.
- 4.2 Notwithstanding clause 4.1, the Panel may publicise the name of the successful candidate and provide general reasons behind their decision when announcing the successful applicant, and may liaise with the NZHF Board and individual applicants to discuss the Panel's reasons behind the decision in relation to that applicant, but otherwise members of the Panel may only release Confidential Information with the approval of the full Panel or the NZHF Board or if legally required.
- 4.3 Contravention of the restrictions on communicating Confidential Information will lead to removal from the Panel and such other penalty as the NZHF Board determines.
- 4.4 Panel members will be required to declare any conflict of interest in relation to any appointment process. The chair will manage a register of conflicts for this purpose (which shall be included within the scope of 'Confidential Information'). This 'conflicts register' will be available for review by NZHF Board. The Panel shall be free to determine the most appropriate way to manage any conflict of interest identified (subject to the exclusion requirements of clause 2.1).
- 4.5 Any failure to declare a conflict and have it recorded on the register may lead to removal from the Panel and such other penalty as the NZHF Board determines.

- 4.6** 'Conflict' for this purpose includes actual or reasonably perceived conflicts. The rule to follow is that if a member of the New Zealand Handball community might reasonably perceive that the relevant person's decision making might be materially influenced by their relationship with an applicant for appointment, a conflict exists.

5. APPOINTEE ELIGIBILITY

- 5.1** Anyone is eligible to be considered for appointment, irrespective of their eligibility to represent New Zealand, subject to any applicable criteria imposed by the International, Asian, or Oceania Continental Handball Federation.
- 5.2** In the event that the Panel determines two candidates for a role are evenly matched, preference shall be given to the candidate with the closest connection to New Zealand and length of their commitment to New Zealand Handball.

6. CRITERIA

- 6.1** The weighting to be given to the appointment criteria for each appointment shall be determined by the Panel on a case by case basis, having regard to the relevant dynamics and stage of development of the relevant squad.
- 6.2** The following criteria shall be taken into account in making any appointment:
- 6.2.1** Technical Competence – technical ability and experience to be an effective coach (or manager, as applicable) of a high performance New Zealand team, irrespective of formal qualifications (unless required as a condition of any international tournament the relevant squad is likely to participate in)
 - 6.2.2** Tactical Nous – tactical ability, including ability to plan for games and read the game, and respond to changes in game situations.
 - 6.2.3** Potential to Improve – if we invest in the appointee now, are we likely to see a future pay off?
 - 6.2.4** Competitive Ability – mental toughness, strength, temperament, determination, commitment, performing in adverse conditions, coping with setbacks/criticism and persistence.
 - 6.2.5** Attitude – ability to inspire and instil confidence in players and supporters.
 - 6.2.6** Team fit – the appointee's cultural fit with the relevant squad.
 - 6.2.7** Communication – the ability to communicate clearly and constructively with players and other NZHF stakeholders and be open to accept suggestions regarding improvement. Appointees should be able to provide constructive feedback to players in a calm, mature and un-emotive manner to allow for positive discussion to resolve problems, and be able to effectively communicate their plans.
 - 6.2.8** Performance statistics – past international or domestic performance statistics, to the extent available and verified as reliable. Any such statistics are to be used as a guide to the appointee's ability to perform effectively at an international level, but should not be determinative.

- 6.2.9 Commitment - anticipated longevity of the appointee's commitment to New Zealand high performance Handball.
- 6.2.10 General – such other factors as the Panel consider relevant for the particular appointment.

7. APPEALS

- 7.1** An applicant may request a review of any appointment decision by submitting a request for an appeal, including the grounds for a review, to the NZHF Complaints Officer within five working days of the announcement of the relevant appointment decision. Decisions to proceed with an appointment under clause 3.10 are not subject to appeal.
- 7.2** The request for the appeal must state the grounds for review, or why the appointment decision should be changed. Only appeals relating to the fairness of the process will be considered.
- 7.3** The NZHF Complaints Officer shall appoint an Appeals Panel to determine the appeal. The Appeals Panel will consist of a minimum of 3 people, only one of which may be a representative of the Panel. Appeals shall be considered promptly, following such process as the Appeals Panel sees fit, following the principles of natural justice (i.e. the Panel should be given opportunity to respond to any criticism of the process it followed).
- 7.4** In the event the NZHF Complaints Officer has a conflict of interest in considering an appeal, the NZHF Board shall take over the appointment of the Appeals Panel, with conflicted Board members excluded from the appeal process.
- 7.5** It should be remembered that in general an appeal will only be considered if this Policy was not adhered to, or the applicant for an appointment was not given 'fair' and 'equal' opportunity during the appointment process. An appeal will not be heard just because an applicant thinks that they are better than, or more deserving than, the successful candidate.
- 7.6** Requests for a Panel decision to be reviewed shall be treated in strictest confidence by the NZHF Complaints Officer, the Appeals Panel, and the Panel itself. The decision of the Appeals Panel shall also be treated in strictest confidence, such that if the appeal is unsuccessful the only person who should know of the appeal are the appellant, the NZHF Complaints Officer, the Appeals Panel, and the Panel itself.
- 7.7** Outcomes of appeals shall be communicated promptly to the appellant. If successful, the Panel shall be asked to revisit the decision in question and the initially successful candidate advised their appointment is being reviewed. If unsuccessful no further avenue of appeal is available.