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NFL STRENGTHENS PERSONAL CONDUCT POLICY AND PROGRAM

The NFL announced today changes to its long-standing personal conduct policy and programs for players, coaches, and other team and league employees.

The modifications focus on expanded educational and support programs in addition to increased levels of discipline for violations of the policy, Commissioner **ROGER GOODELL** said. (The revised policy is attached and also can be found on nflmedia.com.)

"It is important that the NFL be represented consistently by outstanding people as well as great football players, coaches, and staff," Commissioner Goodell said. "We hold ourselves to higher standards of responsible conduct because of what it means to be part of the National Football League. We have long had policies and programs designed to encourage responsible behavior, and this policy is a further step in ensuring that everyone who is part of the NFL meets that standard. We will continue to review the policy and modify it as warranted."

Added NFL Players Association Executive Director **GENE UPSHAW**: "The NFL Players Association and the Player Advisory Council have been discussing this issue for several months. We believe that these are steps that the commissioner needs to take and we support the policy. It is important that players in violation of the policy will have the opportunity and the support to change their conduct and earn their way back."

Education

- The annual rookie symposium of all drafted players will be expanded to include mandatory year-round rookie orientation by all clubs that will reinforce the information presented at the June symposium.
- An expanded annual life-skills program for all players and clubs will be mandatory.
- There will be mandatory briefings each year for all players and clubs given by local law enforcement representatives. These briefings will cover laws pertaining to possession of guns, drinking and driving, domestic disputes and other matters, including gang-related activities in the community that could be of significance to players, coaches, and other club-related personnel.
- Every club will be required to implement a program for employees to enhance compliance with laws relating to drinking and driving.
- Counseling and treatment programs for all club and league employees that violate the policy will be expanded.

Discipline

- The standard of socially responsible conduct for NFL employees will be higher. Club and league employees will be held to a higher standard than players. Conduct that undermines or puts at risk the integrity and reputation of the NFL will be subject to discipline, even if not criminal in nature.
- Discipline for individuals that violate the policy will include larger fines and longer suspensions.
- Repeat violations of the personal conduct policy will be dealt with aggressively, including discipline for repeat offenders even when the conduct itself has not yet resulted in a conviction of a crime.
- Individuals suspended under the policy must earn their way back to active status by fully complying with professional counseling and treatment that will include evaluation on a regular basis.
- Clubs will be subject to discipline in cases involving violations of the Personal Conduct Policy by club employees. In determining potential club discipline going forward, the commissioner will consider all relevant factors, including the history of conduct-related violations by that club's employees and the extent to which the club's support programs are consistent with best practices as identified and shared with the clubs. Recommended best practices include having a full-time club player development director and a full-time club security director.

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