



Statement on Athlete and Participant Safety Program

Wisconsin Youth Soccer Association has developed this Athlete and Participant Safety Program as part of the WYSA Risk Management Program. The Athlete and Participant Safety Program was developed to meet requirements set forth by Public Law 115-126 *Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017* (the "SafeSport Act"), as well as U.S. Soccer Federation Policy 212-3.

Wisconsin Youth Soccer Association has zero tolerance for abuse or misconduct. All participants in the soccer community must play an active role in creating an environment that is free from emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. This program was developed to implement policies and processes to help participants detect and report abuse, respond to it, and prevent future occurrences. In order to maintain compliance with USSF Policy 212-3, WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program includes six key components: Background Screening Policy, Mandatory Reporting Policy, Training and Education Policy, Prohibited Conduct Policy, Policy to Limit One-on-One Interactions, and Policy on Monitoring and Enforcement. Also included is a list of definitions for key terms mentioned within these six policies.

This program uses the term "Covered Personnel" to refer to those adults (aged 18 and older) to whom these policies apply. Covered Personnel are required to follow all policies included in WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program. Covered Personnel include adult individuals (aged 18 and over) who are authorized directly by WYSA or indirectly by a member organization that is directly affiliated with WYSA to have:

- a) Routine and/or regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor;
- b) Authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor;
- c) Authority over those adults who have routine and/or regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor.

A minor athlete that reaches the age of majority may not be subject to athlete prevention policies if they remain an athlete, and when interacting with minor athletes who are 16 or older. Athlete prevention policies are in effect when this now age of majority athlete interacts with minor athletes 15 or younger. Should a minor athlete reach the age of majority and then obtain a position that presents a potential power imbalance, such as becoming a coach, the individual is subject to athlete prevention policies.

"Routine and/or regular contact" with an amateur athlete who is a minor is defined as recurring, repeated, or periodic contact between an adult and a minor.

"Authority over those adults who have routine and/or regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor" is defined as supervisory or decision-making authority over an adult who has recurring, repeated, or periodic contact with minors.

Examples of Covered Personnel may include but are not limited to:

1. WYSA board members;
2. WYSA committee members;
3. WYSA employees and independent contractors;
4. Club and District Board Members, Representatives, Administrators and/or Volunteers;
5. Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, Other Team Officials, Team Trainers;

6. Referees*

**While Referees, Referee Coaches, Referee Mentors, Referee Assignors, and other Referee Program-Affiliated Personnel are expected to adhere to these policies due to referee involvement in WYSA sanctioned activities and competitions, it is understood that these individuals are also subject to any policies set forth by the Wisconsin Program for Referee Development and/or U.S. Soccer Policy.*

Many aspects of this policy are issued in order to protect Minor Participants in the sport of soccer who participate in WYSA sanctioned activities and competitions. This policy uses the term "Minor Participants" to refer to athletes, referees, coaches, or otherwise, who are under the lesser of (1) the age of 18; or (2) the age of majority in the applicable state, and who are participating in WYSA sanctioned activities and competitions. Additionally, although this Athlete and Participant Safety Program focuses in many areas on concerns unique to Minor Participants, these policies may be applicable to, and are designed to protect participants of all ages.

Should circumstances arise in which an activity or competition sanctioned by WYSA requires the use of adult volunteers and/or other adult individuals who 1) do not have routine and/or regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor, and 2) are authorized by WYSA and/or WYSA member organization(s) to act on the behalf of WYSA and/or WYSA member organization(s), the following shall apply:

- a) Adult individuals that do not meet the definition of Covered Personnel as described above shall be prohibited from having one-on-one contact with Minor Participants.
- b) If such adult individuals that do not meet the definition of Covered Personnel as described above have any contact with any Minor Participants, at least one Covered Personnel (who is compliant with all policies included in WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program) shall be present and will supervise the WYSA sanctioned activity or competition to help ensure the safety of Minor Participants around such adult individuals that do not meet the definition of Covered Personnel as described above.

As part of WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program, WYSA encourages a culture of respect and open communication in which all participants feel comfortable reporting concerns, whether the concerns involve suspected abuse or any other misconduct. Participants are encouraged to raise concerns to coaches, referees, team administrators, and WYSA employees or board members.

In the event WYSA receives a report or complaint that implicates a reporting obligation to law enforcement authorities (see "Mandatory Reporting Policy"), WYSA will make the report directly to law enforcement and/or will work with the individual who submitted the report or complaint to make the report directly to law enforcement. WYSA does not tolerate retaliation of any kind. No individual who makes a good faith report of misconduct will be subject to retaliation, including harassment, as a result of making a report.

The WYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program is not an exclusive statement of all policies and processes pertaining to WYSA and its affiliated leagues and programming. WYSA affiliated clubs may implement additional policies and procedures specific to their operations. Furthermore, the WYSA Employee Handbook provides further guidance applicable to WYSA Employees on other matters to address conduct that may not be covered by the WYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program.

WYSA recognizes that social norms continue to develop, as does the legal framework under which we operate. Accordingly, the WYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program will always be subject to modification, amendment and further development by WYSA, in its discretion. The WYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program and all policies herein may be amended from time to time by vote of the WYSA Board of Directors. Limited exceptions to these policies may be granted by WYSA on a case-by-case basis where appropriate, provided that such exceptions do not materially impact the safety of Minor Participants.

WYSA does not control the day-to-day operations of our direct member organizations or of those organizations that

are indirectly affiliated with WYSA via membership or participation with any WYSA direct member organization. WYSA recognizes that individual club and district organizations range in size, structure, resources, operations, and stakeholder needs. Additionally, each organization may have different levels of risk based on very different programs. Accordingly, each organization is encouraged to conduct an independent assessment of its own practices and evaluate how best to implement its own risk management program that maintains compliance with WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program, USSF Policy 212-3, and the SafeSport Act.

The WYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program and these six policies are hereby issued as of August 1, 2019. To allow adequate opportunity to ensure policy changes and compliance, WYSA direct member organizations, and those organizations that are indirectly affiliated with WYSA via membership or participation with any WYSA direct member organization, are expected to maintain compliance with these requirements on or before September 1, 2019 (but are nonetheless urged to complete compliance as early as practicable). Effective September 1, 2019, any WYSA direct member organization, or any organization that is indirectly affiliated with WYSA via membership or participation with any WYSA direct member organization, not in compliance with the requirements set forth by the WYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program will be subject to enforcement as provided the "Policy on Monitoring and Enforcement" of this program.

Definitions for terms included in Program

For the purposes of WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program, we recognize the following definitions for terms used:

a) Adult Applicant:

For the purposes of the Background Screening Policy within WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program, an Adult Applicant includes any individual aged 18 or older who is a coach, assistant coach, team manager, assistant team manager, team trainer, team official, WYSA employee, WYSA board member, WYSA committee member, WYSA independent contractor, Club or League President, Club or League Delegate, Club or League Official, Club or League Representative, Club or League Administrator, Club or League Volunteer, or referee, or any other individual aged 18 or older seeking affiliation with WYSA or WYSA affiliated member organizations, who has regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor.

b) U.S. Center for SafeSport:

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent 501(c)(3) authorized pursuant to the SafeSport Act, with jurisdiction over the USOC and NGBs with regard to safeguarding amateur athletes against abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse, in sports, and which has been further tasked with certain duties in the areas of education and outreach, policy development, and response and resolution.

c) Core SafeSport Training:

The U.S. Center for SafeSport's online training, which consists of three modules: (1) Sexual Misconduct Awareness Education; (2) Mandatory Reporting, and (3) Emotional & Physical Misconduct, or the U.S. Center for SafeSport's in person PPT approved training.

d) Covered Personnel:

This policy uses the term "Covered Personnel" to refer to those adults (aged 18 and older) to whom these policies apply. Covered Personnel are required to follow all policies included in WYSA's Athlete and Participant Safety Program. Covered Personnel include adult individuals (aged 18 and over) who are authorized directly by WYSA or indirectly by a club/league that is directly affiliated with WYSA to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor. Examples of Covered Personnel include but are not limited to:

- (1) WYSA board members;
- (2) WYSA committee members;
- (3) WYSA employees and independent contractors;
- (4) Club and League Presidents, Club and League Delegates, Club and League Officials, Club and League Representatives, Club and League Administrators, and Club and League Volunteers;

- (5) Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, Assistant Team Managers, Team Officials, and Team Trainers;
- (6) Referees*

*While Referees, Referee Coaches, Referee Mentors, Referee Assignors, and other Referee Program-Affiliated Personnel are expected to adhere to these policies due to referee involvement in WYSA sanctioned activities and competitions, it is understood that these individuals are also subject to any policies set forth by the Wisconsin Referee Committee and/or U.S. Soccer Policy.

- e) Minor Participants:
Any participant, whether athlete, referee, or otherwise, who is under the lesser of (1) the age of 18; or (2) the age of majority in the applicable state, and who is participating in WYSA sanctioned activities and competitions.
- f) National Governing Body (NGB):
A U.S. Olympic National Governing Body, Pan American Sport Organization, or Paralympic Sport Organization recognized by the United States Olympic Committee pursuant to the *Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act*, 36 U.S.C. §§ 220501-220529. U.S. Soccer is a National Governing Body.
- g) Routine and/or regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor:
Recurring, repeated or periodic contact between an adult and a minor.
- h) Authority over those adults who have routine and/or regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor:
Supervisory or decision-making authority over an adult who has recurring, repeated, or periodic contact with minors.
- i) SafeSport Refresher Course:
The U.S. Center for SafeSport's online training course(s) designed for those who have completed the initial "Core SafeSport Training" or the Center's in person PPT approved training designated as "refresher" courses.
- j) The SafeSport Act:
Public Law 115-126, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017.
- k) USOC:
The United States Olympic Committee.