



## Athlete & Participant Safety Policy

### **Rule 029. ATHLETE & PARTICIPANT SAFETY POLICY 7/13/19**

It is the policy of the Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA) to comply with Public Law 115-126 Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 that was passed by Congress on February 14, 2018.

#### **Section 1. Introduction, Purpose, and Applicability**

This policy should not be viewed as creating a legal standard of care or a model of best practice. Illinois Youth Soccer Association (“IYSA”) does not control the day-to-day operations of its Local Affiliated Organizations (“LAO”), who are independently organized, nor does it control Organizations who operate individual clubs. Each LAO and organization must maintain its own risk management programs and comply with the SafeSport Act and US Soccer Bylaws and Policies.

- a. The IYSA Athlete & Participant Safety Policy establishes the ethical standards for IYSA and its LAOs including but not limited to their representatives, board members, administrators, employees, coaches, referees, independent contractors, volunteers and participants (collectively referred to as “Participants”) within any and all IYSA sanctioned or LAO programs, events, activities and competitions. Amateur Athlete who is a minor also includes other participants including referees who are minors.
- b. The IYSA Athlete & Participant Safety Policy applies to any individual designated as “Participant” which means any adult authorized by IYSA or a LAO to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor and/or to have access to the data of an amateur athlete who is a minor. For IYSA, Participant includes individuals who are involved or engage with any sanctioned IYSA or LAO soccer program, event, activity or competition.
- c. A minor athlete that reaches the age of majority may not be subject to Prevention Policies in their capacity as an athlete, and when interacting with youth participants who are 16 or older. 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 or referee, the individual is subject to Prevention Policies.
- d. The purposes of the IYSA Athlete & Participant Safety Policy is to provide evidence of IYSA’s commitment to the lawful and ethical conduct of its Participants and to protect those who report violations of the IYSA Athlete & Participant Safety Policy.
- e. The IYSA Athlete & Participant Safety Policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws governing behavior.
- f. LAOs and Participants must respect and comply with IYSA rules and regulations, observe high standards of conduct, and participate in establishing and maintaining such high standards.

## **Section 2. Zero Tolerance**

IYSA maintains a zero tolerance regarding abuse. The IYSA Zero Tolerance for abuse extends to IYSA, its LAOs and the Participants in all IYSA and LAO sanctioned programs, events, activities and competitions. IYSA requires every Participant to assist in creating a safe environment for minor athletes at and during any and all sanctioned IYSA and LAO programs, events, activities and competitions.

## **Section 3. Appropriate Background Screening**

Adult Participants must take the appropriate background screening prior to taking on a role that gives them regular contact with IYSA and LAO Participants who are minors. At minimum, the policy must meet US Soccer and National Council of Youth Sports screening requirements. See IYSA Rule 019.

## **Section 4. Education & Training**

Adult Participants must successfully complete every year the US Center for SafeSport Training as a condition of their participation with the IYSA and its LAOs before regular contact with Participants who are minors.

## **Section 5. Mandatory Reporting**

LAOs must maintain a procedure for reporting misconduct to the extent required by the SafeSport Act. Adult Participants must immediately report suspected child abuse or sexual misconduct to both Law Enforcement Authorities and the US Center for SafeSport. Adult Participants are required to report emotional and physical misconduct (bullying, stalking, hazing, and harassment) to the organization with which the Participant is affiliated. Reporting may be made anonymously to the Center and retaliation against individuals making good faith reports of child abuse is expressly prohibited.

## **Section 5. Prohibited Substances**

IYSA prohibits smoking and the use and possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, cannabis, tobacco by Participants at IYSA sanctioned programs, events, activities and competitions.

## **Section 6. Prohibited Activities and Sexual Misconduct**

- a. IYSA prohibits any sexual activity with a child.
- b. IYSA prohibits any sexual interaction between an athlete and any individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority.
- c. IYSA prohibits nudity and any indecent exposure by a Participant at all sanctioned programs, events, activities and competitions.
- d. IYSA prohibits a Participant from engaging in sexually oriented conversations at all sanctioned programs, events, activities and competitions. This includes sharing information about one's own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities.
- e. IYSA prohibits the possession of any sexually oriented materials including magazines and videos while participating at any sanctioned program, event, activity and competition.

## **Section 7. Physical Contact**

Physical contact with athletes must take place in public, have no potential for or actual physical or sexual contact during the physical contact, must be for the benefit of the athlete and must not

meet an emotional or other need of an adult. IYSA prohibits a Participant from engaging in any other form of physical contact with and or between athletes.

### **Section 8. One-on-One Interactions**

IYSA requires LAOs to establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between Youth Participants and Adult Participants. One-on-One interactions between a minor and an adult who is not the minor's parent/legal guardian are permitted if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult. Isolated, one-on-one interactions between minors and an adult who is not the minor's parent/legal guardian are prohibited, except under emergency circumstances.

#### a. Meetings

1. Meetings between adults and minors may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
2. If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. It will occur in an office that (if available) has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.

#### b. Individual Training Sessions

1. Individual training sessions between adults and minors are permitted only if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult.
2. Written consent must be obtained prior to each individual training session from the parent/legal guardian.
3. Parents, guardians, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe the training session.

#### c. Out-of-Program Contacts

1. Participants are prohibited from interacting one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside the program including but not limited to one's home, restaurants and individual's transportation.

### **Section 9. Massages and Rubdowns**

- a. Any massage or rubdown by an adult on a minor athlete is prohibited unless such adult is a licensed massage therapist.
- b. Even if the coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach shall not perform a massage or rubdown on an athlete under any circumstance.
- c. Any massage or rubdown must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and may not be done with only the minor athlete and professional alone in a room.
- d. Written consent must be obtained from the parent/legal guardian before performing a massage or rubdown on a minor athlete.
- e. Parent/legal guardian must be permitted in the room as an observer.

### **Section 10. Locker rooms, Rest Rooms and Changing Areas**

#### a. Use of Recording Devices

Use of any device including a cell phone with recording capabilities and voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, rest rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces is prohibited.

#### b. Undress

An unrelated adult must never be undressed (disrobed or partial or full nudity where private body parts are exposed) in front of participants who are minors.

c. Isolated one-on-one interactions

At no time are unrelated adults permitted to be alone with a minor in a locker room, rest room, or changing areas except under emergency circumstances.

d. Monitoring

LOAs are required to regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms, rest rooms and changing areas at facilities under their jurisdiction to ensure compliance with these policies.

e. Non-exclusive facility

If the LOA uses a facility not under its jurisdiction (for, e.g., training or competition or similar events) and the facility is used by multiple constituents, adults are nonetheless required to adhere to the rules set forth herein.

## **Section 11. Social Media and Electronic Communications**

a. Professional Content

1. All electronic communication originating from participating adults to amateur athletes who are minors must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or team-oriented communications.

b. Open and Transparent

1. If a participating adult needs to communicate directly with an amateur athlete who is a minor via electronic communications, another participating adult or the minor's parent/legal guardian must be copied.

2. If a minor athlete communicates to the participating adult privately first, the participating adult must respond to the minor athlete with a copy to another participating adult or the minor's parent/legal guardian.

3. A participating adult communicating electronically to the entire team must copy another participating adult.

4. Amateur athletes who are minors may "friend" the organization's official page.

c. Prohibited Electronic Communications

1. Participating adults are not permitted to communicate privately via electronic communications with amateur athletes who are minors, except under emergency circumstances.

2. Participating adults are not permitted to "private message," "instant message," "direct message", or send photos via Snapchat or Instagram to a minor athlete privately.

3. Participating adults are not permitted to maintain social media connections with minors; such adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from amateur athletes who are minors and existing social media connections with amateur athletes who are minors shall be discontinued.

d. Request to Discontinue

1. Parent/legal guardian may request in writing that their child not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by the organization or by the organization's participating adults. The organization will abide by any such request that their child not be contacted via electronic communication, absent emergency circumstances.

## **Section 12. Local Travel**

Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, and competition that does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).

- a. IYSA does not arrange local travel.
- b. Participating adults who are not also acting as a legal guardian, must not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated athlete who is a minor, absent emergency circumstances, and may only drive with at least two other minor athletes or another adult at all times, unless the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian provides written consent prior to each local travel.

## **Section 13. Team Travel**

Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.

- a. Team Travel
  1. When only one participating adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete must have his/her parent/legal guardian's prior written consent to travel alone with the participating adult for each competition.
  2. Organization's Team Travel Policy must be signed and agreed to by all minor athletes, parents/legal guardians, and participating adults travelling with the organization.
  3. Participating adults who travel with the organization must successfully pass the appropriate background search (see Section 3) and other organization requirements.
- b. Hotel rooms
  1. Participating adults must not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete (unless the participating adult is the parent/legal guardian, sibling, or is otherwise related to the minor athlete).
  2. Room checks and all other activities must be conducted consistent with IYSA policy for one-on-one interactions (see Section 8).
- c. Meetings
  1. Meetings must be conducted consistent with IYSA policy for one-on-one interactions (See Section 8) – i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible.
  2. Meetings must not be conducted in a hotel room.

## **Section 14. Harassment**

IYSA prohibits LAOs and their Participants from engaging in unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on a person's protected status at any sanctioned program, event, activity of competition.

## **Section 15. Bullying**

IYSA prohibits LAOs and their Participants from engaging in any activity designed to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted person as a condition of membership.

## **Section 16. Hazing**

IYSA prohibits LAOs and their Participants from engaging in any activity that could be defined as hazing at any sanctioned program, event, activity or competition.