

PLAYER PROTECTION POLICIES

MYSA has adopted the following Player Protection policies:

1. The Affiliate Member shall distribute to all members of the organization copies of the Player/Adult Safety Guidelines.
 2. All applicants for positions as coaches, assistant coaches, athletic trainers, team managers/responsible adults, and Board Members shall return a completed Adult Registration/Informed Consent form to the Affiliate Member's risk manager prior to beginning their work with the organization's youth. The risk manager shall also have Adult Registration/Informed Consent forms signed by any other volunteer s/he deems necessary due to the volunteer's access to the youth of the organization.
 3. The Affiliate Member will forward the Adult Registration/Informed Consent forms to the State Risk Manager to have background checks performed on all applicants for positions as coaches, assistant coaches, athletic trainers, and board members annually. Background checks on volunteers not holding the positions specified above will be discretionary, not mandatory.
 4. MYSA and its Affiliate Members shall not knowingly permit any person convicted of a crime against persons, a crime of violence, or the sale of illegal substances within the last 15 years to become or remain in any volunteer position for the organization. If background checks reveal convictions of any crimes within the past 15 years from the date of application, the person's application shall be rejected or s/he will be dismissed from any position s/he holds in the organization. Any convictions occurring more than 15 years ago may be considered by the State Risk Manager in the determining of the applicant's suitability for the position, but will not automatically disqualify the application.
 5. The Affiliate Member shall appoint a local risk manager to distribute and collect the Adult Registration/Informed Consent forms and to act as a liaison between the Affiliate Member and the State Risk Manager.
 6. The Affiliate Member, and/or MYSA, shall discipline persons found to have violated its Guidelines and policies.
 7. The State Risk Manager shall share information found in performing background checks with the Affiliate Member Risk Manager.
 8. In the event the Affiliate Member receives a complaint of physical or sexual abuse of a player, the risk manager shall report the abuse to the local law enforcement authorities.
 9. After a physical or sexual abuse complaint has been formally lodged with the local law enforcement authority, the risk manager shall inform the alleged offender, in writing and by registered mail, that s/he is suspended immediately from all activities within the organization until the complaint is dismissed.
 10. If any complaint is filed with MYSA regarding a violation of Player/Adult Protection Guidelines or the organization's Harassment Policies, other than physical or sexual abuse, the State Risk Manager shall speak to all parties involved, make a written report of the complaint and his/her findings, and shall make a decision regarding discipline (if appropriate). If either party, the complainant or the accused, wishes to appeal the decision or discipline rendered by the State Risk Manager, they may do so to the MYSA Appeals Committee.
 11. The committee shall hear the complaint in person or in writing. After hearing the complaint and any response, and reviewing the report of the State Risk Manager, the committee shall make its findings and determination.
 12. The Affiliate Member shall send copies of such reports regarding alleged physical or sexual abuse of a player to the State Risk Manager. The State Risk Manager shall maintain confidential files of all abuse complaints made against persons involved in the organization.
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PLAYER/ADULT PROTECTION GUIDELINES

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, we will define **ADULT** as those persons in their roles as coach, assistant coach, board member, team manager or volunteer who works with, for or around **PLAYERS**. This would include anyone older than the age group they are interacting with; for example, a 15-year old assistant coach of a U-11 team would be considered an **ADULT** for the purposes of these Guidelines.

PLAYER defines all persons who are members of or play on a soccer team. This definition does include those players who participate at the U-19 level, even though they may be of legal age.

In the example of the 15-year old assistant coach: if s/he is also a rostered participant on a U-16 or higher team, that person is also subject to the guidelines applicable to a **PLAYER**.

GUIDELINES

These guidelines recognize that the lines of authority and separation between adults and players must be recognized and respected. Generally, players are children and as such, deserve special protection. These guidelines provide that protection while setting levels of acceptable conduct for adults.

I. Physical Contact

A. **ADULTS** must be aware that any physical contact with **PLAYERS** can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary and appropriate to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate a player. In the instance of teaching a skill, minimal contact should be involved and none which places the **ADULT** in a position of power and/or intimidation; for example, taking a **PLAYER** by the shoulders and physically moving them to another field or body position.

B. Sexual contact of any kind or type is prohibited between **ADULTS** and **PLAYERS**, whether or not contact is consensual. [The exemption to this guideline would be in the event of player/coach spouses or legally-declared domestic partners.]

II. Social Contact

A. **ADULTS** should not socialize or spend time alone with **PLAYERS** except at games, practices, or team functions. An **ADULT** in a one-on-one situation with a **PLAYER** is generally inappropriate.

1. **ADULTS** should avoid instances such as driving alone with a non-family **PLAYER**. However, in the event that a **PLAYER** remains on a field waiting for transportation, the **ADULT** should wait with the **PLAYER on the field** to guarantee the **PLAYER'S** safety and well-being. (**ADULTS** should stress with their **PLAYERS'** parents the responsibility for safe and timely transportation to and from the field.)
2. During out-of-town tournaments, a non-parent/custodian **ADULT** shall not share any sleeping arrangements with a **PLAYER** or **PLAYERS**.
3. **ADULTS** should respect the privacy of **PLAYERS**. If shower or changing room facilities are available, schedules should be arranged so that **ADULTS** and **PLAYERS** have separate use. If using a changing room, **ADULTS** should provide privacy for **PLAYERS** to make necessary

preparations before entering for pre/post-game discussions. In addition, **ADULTS** should not allow others to enter except by the expressed wish of the **PLAYERS** still present.

III. Health and Well-being

A. **ADULTS** share the responsibility for the **PLAYERS'** health while at practices, scrimmages, and games. **ADULTS** should have **PLAYERS'** release forms and medical kits with them at all times. **ADULTS** are also responsible for seeing that the field conditions are safe for the **PLAYERS** and that the field equipment is in good, safe condition prior to the start of any activity.

B. Head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a **PLAYER** remaining out of the game.

C. **ADULTS** transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use with **PLAYERS** and other vehicle occupants.

D. **ADULTS** need to be aware of signs of neglect and abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) of the **PLAYERS**. Observations should be reported to the local law enforcement agency.

IV. Language

A. Offensive and insulting language by **ADULTS** or **PLAYERS** is unacceptable. **ADULTS** should model good communication skills.

B. Language that is denigrating in nature, content or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or religion is unacceptable.

C. Inappropriate language targeting officials, opponents, or spectators may be grounds for **PLAYER** penalties or **ADULTS'** removal from the game and/or the premises.

V. Violations

A. Violations of these guidelines by **ADULTS** or **PLAYERS** will subject them to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to, warnings, sanctions, suspensions or release by the Affiliate Member and/or MYSA.

B. Appropriate legal authorities may be called upon based on the nature of the violation.

C. Anyone witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the violation to the office of the State Risk Manager/Vice President of Administration, MYSA.