



Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017

On February 14th, 2018, the President signed the **Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017** which is aimed at protecting amateur athletes* from sexual abuse. What exactly does the Law state?

The Law has a three-pronged approach:

1. Any adult interacting with amateur athletes in the program has a duty to report abuse and or suspected abuse within a 24-hour period. EVERY adult is a mandatory reporter.
2. The statute of limitations is extended for up to 10 years after a victim realizes he or she was abused.
3. Limits an athlete under the age of 18 from being alone with an adult who is not their parent.

**What is an amateur athlete?* Any child or minor under the age of 18.

What are the requirements for National Governing Body and NGB-Affiliated?

Reporting: A mechanism that allows a complaint to be easily reported for a reasonable suspicion of Sexual or Physical abuse/neglect, within a 24-hour period of awareness. Federal regulations state that reports should be made to a) local law enforcement and b) local/state child protective services c) US Soccer, and d) the US Center for SafeSport. EVERYONE is a MANDATORY REPORTER.

Mechanism for Reporting: Everyone listed below MUST be contacted when physical or sexual abuse is suspected

1. Local Law Enforcement Number (recommended to post on club website and give to athletes and parents)
2. Local Child Protective Services Number (recommended to post on club website and give to athletes and parents)
3. Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services:
<https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/about-dhs/dcfs;>
Arkansas Children's Advocacy Center: http://cacarkansas.org/how_to_report.php
Mandatory Reporting Requirements: <https://apps.rainn.org/policy/policy-state-laws-export.cfm?state=Arkansas&group=4>
4. Club Risk Manager Contact Information (every club should have a point person for reporting)
5. Arkansas State Soccer Association; Jim Walker, Executive Director; (501) 833-0550 Ext. 1;
Director@ArkansasSoccer.org
6. National Governing Body (NGB)
US Soccer Integrity Hotline Number: (312) 528 - 7004
US Soccer: <https://www.ussoccer.com/integrity-hotline>
US Center for SafeSport: <https://www.safesport.org/report-a-concern>

Mechanism for Reporting (cont.): Other forms of misconduct such as emotional abuse, bullying, hazing, or harassment.

1. Club Risk Manager Contact Information (every club should have a point person for reporting)
2. Club or BOD Review/Hearing – There should be a process in place to document and address this other misconduct. The decision of the Club or BOD should be sent to Arkansas State Soccer Association; Attn.: Jim Walker; Director@ArkansasSoccer.org.

Reasonable Procedures: Policies and procedures aimed at PREVENTING one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete who is a minor and an adult.

An individual who is required, but fails, to report suspected child sexual abuse is subject to criminal penalties including fines and up to one (1) year in jail.

What are the requirements for NGB's and NGB-Affiliated?

Prevention Training: Offer and provide consistent training to adult members who are in contact with amateur athletes who are minors. Currently there is no mandated training provider. Several program options currently exist for awareness/prevention training of sexual abuse. Until there is a mandate or law change, you may use whatever program your organization deems will meet this training requirement. Some programs are currently available at no cost to the adult or organization. Most programs will take between 75 to 90 minutes to complete.

The US Center for SafeSport is one example:

- US Center for SafeSport: To enroll in this program just click on the link below, click on “Sign In,” click on “Register.” When prompted make sure to select US Soccer as your NGB and then enter the access code proved below.
 - To register or learn more: <https://www.safesport.org/>
 - Access code: **YC3E-6P5G-YYIL-CS2M**
- In order to complete your course registration you will receive an email to confirm your email address. You must respond to this email to activate your account.
- Upon completion, print out your certificate and keep on file.

Prohibit Retaliation: Include in your club policy that there can be no retaliation from the club toward those who are reporting.

What is being done next?

Both US Soccer and US Youth Soccer are developing a strategy to help all State Associations understand, communicate and manage their abuse prevention programs.

This communication, which follows up on previous communications from both US Soccer and US Youth Soccer, provides a summary of the new law and the requirements for mandatory reporting. The new law states that The Center for Safe Sports shall develop training, oversight practices, policies and procedures for implementation by a NGB. This work is in progress and will be communicated when available.

What else is important to know about this Law? How might my club be impacted?

There are additional and more specific requirements for several categories of youth sports providers listed as ‘Applicable Entity’ within the Bill. Those listed under this category include:

- National Governing Body (NGB) – Such as the United States Soccer Federation
- Amateur Sports Organization (sanctioned by NGB) – Such as your local State Association and Member Affiliates (town programs, clubs and leagues)

- Amateur Sports Organizations (NOT sanctioned by NGB) – Such as YMCA, Church Leagues, Municipal Leagues, Independent Recreation Leagues, Camps, all others

U.S. Center for SafeSport fact sheet: <https://www.safesport.org/files/details/78>