

PA West Soccer Association

Risk Management/Zero Tolerance Policy

Approved April 27, 2008

The following guidelines and procedures are established for our staff, coaches, referees, volunteers and participants. All members of PA West are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines including but not limited to coaches, players, managers, club and team officials, referees, and volunteers that are registered through PA West. In addition, spectators that are participating through the registration of their child/children with PA West are expected to adhere to this policy as well.

Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse

Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. Pa West does not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.

Physical or sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks or materials, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, providing drugs, alcohol or tobacco products, or any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.

Emotional or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but not limited to, use of foul language or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.

All coaches, officials, and volunteers are appointed through the registration process as protection advocates of this policy. Every member is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward participants by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.

PA West recommends that every activity sponsored by its member organizations put a BUDDY SYSTEM in place. Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere - to the bathroom, locker rooms, or other location, without his or her buddy.

To further protect youth participants, as well as the coaches, volunteers, and officials, we strongly recommend that no adult person allow himself/herself to be alone with a child during sponsored activities.

- Do not drive alone with a child participant (other than your own children) in the car.

- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room.
- If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of in a private setting.

When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms.

Children should be empowered to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns and fears are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

The PA West board of directors and the risk management committee will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. When the action is a violation of law, information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization's directors. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly and may be subject to a disciplinary hearing.

Any person accused of violating this policy may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the appropriate Board, until the matter is resolved. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.

Our mission is to promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers, and spectators. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; and they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

Enforcing PA West Zero Tolerance Policy

The objective of the PA West adjudication process is to ensure that every member of PA West will receive a fair, impartial, objective, and timely hearing of any complaint or appeal that has standing before the committee. The Risk Management Committee will review the facts presented and forward them to the appropriate Hearings and Appeals Committee. The Risk Management Committee will follow the fact finding and Hearing of the appropriate district or division or board and report to the Board of Directors.

The Adjudication will:

- Review decisions and appeals from its PA West members
- Investigate other cases delegated to it by the PA West Board of Directors

The Adjudication Committee relies on USSF Bylaws and Policy, USYSA, and PA West *Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse* as its guiding principles. Coaches, players, managers, club team officials, volunteers, and spectators that are registered through PA West are expected to adhere to these guiding principles. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. PA West does not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.

This Risk Management Policy includes the required clearances for PA West participation. See E-Kids Safe.

Secretary Signature

Date

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