



## Memorandum

**Date:** May 16, 2018

**TO:** US Youth Soccer Presidents and Executive Directors

**CC:** Board of Directors, General Managers, Program/Committee Chairs

**FR:** Chris Moore, US Youth Soccer CEO

**RE:** Protecting US Youth Soccer players

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Creating the safest playing environment for youth players and their families is of paramount importance to US Youth Soccer, which is why we put a leadership “stake in the ground” more than a year ago by being the first national soccer organization in the United States to offer its members a sexual abuse training program.

- On February 24, 2017, nearly one month after conducting a well-attended, sexual abuse awareness training prevention session at the US Youth Soccer Workshop in Los Angeles, we issued a [release](#) to State Associations and the public, announcing the launch of the new training platform and partnership with Abuse Prevention Systems (APS) at no cost to members.
- Four months later, on June 19, 2017, we issued another memo advising our members that legislation was being proposed by Congress requiring the following key provisions:
  - Mandatory reporting of child and sexual abuse
  - Civil remedy for personal injury
  - Expansion of authorities and duties of amateur sports organizations recognized by the USOC to prevent the abuse of minor and amateur athletes

In the memo, I **highly recommended** that State Associations begin implementing sexual abuse awareness training, as final passage of the legislation appeared imminent.

- At the January 2018 US Youth Soccer Workshop in Philadelphia, we hosted yet another session for State Associations attending the Leadership Development Symposium, advising them of the status of the proposed new legislation, what it required and how the new law would ultimately impact the entire youth sports landscape.
- The [Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017](#) was signed into law on February 14, 2018, rendering this type of training and reporting mandatory.
- In February 2018, US Youth Soccer also began active discussions with U.S. Soccer’s legal counsel to explore collaboration and to provide clarity and education to State Associations on what the new federal law requires.
- At its March 10-11, 2018 Board of Directors meeting, a new Code of Conduct addressing all forms of misconduct, including sexual, hazing, bullying, harassment, and the like, was approved.
- US Youth Soccer announced on May 16, 2018 that we would continue to offer APS at no cost to State Associations for the 2018-19 seasonal year.

As of this writing, 42 State Associations and 156 local clubs are currently utilizing the APS platform, and are providing the requisite training in compliance with federal law. As a reminder, State Associations may opt to use APS or US Center for SafeSport.

Attached is a tool that you may customize and use for educating and communicating to your member clubs/leagues about the specific provisions within the Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017. I would like to give a special “thanks” to Massachusetts Youth Soccer for allowing us to take their document, make changes and adapt it for the entire US Youth Soccer membership.

Finally, at the upcoming AGM, we will be introducing bylaw changes aimed at further protecting our players, strengthening US Youth Soccer risk management protocols and reaffirming our leadership position within the youth soccer landscape.

Many organizations boast about having the strictest of policies, and claim that they are doing more than anyone else to keep players safe. I am proud, and you should be too, that US Youth Soccer and our member State Associations were prepared for the new federal legislation; and we led on this issue by offering training sessions to clubs, leagues and volunteers over a year ago, long before the President signed the new bill into law.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. Thank you for your support and continued leadership.

Chris