

# AUSTIN WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE PROHIBITED CONDUCT POLICY

This Policy applies to all Austin Women's Soccer League (AWSL) Executive Committee, paid staff, and extends to all operations.

AWSL is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of any legally protected status. Accordingly, AWSL does not permit any form of unlawful harassment, discrimination or intimidation against its Executive Committee, paid employees, contract employees, volunteers, or league members. Protected status includes race, color, age, religion, marital status, sex, ancestry, national origin, citizenship, veteran's status, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, protected activity, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. The policy also prohibits harassment on the basis of the protected status of an individual's relatives, friends or associates.

AWSL is also committed to maintaining a work environment that is free from all forms of sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, bullying and hazing.

Any violation of this Policy by a Executive Committee Member, Officer, contract employee, volunteer, or league members may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Harassment

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status. AWSL will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects or unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or safety, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Among the types of conduct prohibited by this policy are epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping or intimidating acts based on an individual's protected status and the circulation or posting of written or graphic materials that show hostility toward an individual because of his or her protected status.

Prohibited conduct can also include jokes, kidding, or teasing about another person's protected status. While harassing conduct is unlawful only if it affects tangible job benefits and/or interferes unreasonably with work performance and creates an abusive or hostile work environment, this Policy forbids harassing conduct even when it does not rise to the level of a violation of law.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment deserves special mention. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting that individual; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance and creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may involve individuals of the same or different gender. It may also occur between individuals of any employment status.

Examples of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment and are prohibited by this Policy include, but are not limited to:

- unnecessary touching, patting, hugging, pinching, or brushing against a person's body;
- staring, ogling, leering, or whistling at a person;
- continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- sexually explicit statements, sexual flirtations, advances, propositions, subtle pressure for sexual activity, comments, questions, jokes, or anecdotes;
- graphic or degrading comments about a person's clothing, body or sexual activity;
- sexually suggestive objects, cartoons, posters, calendars, or pictures in the workplace;
- suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations;
- harassing use of electronic mail, electronic or instant messaging, or telephone communication systems; or
- other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

AWSL prohibits Executive Committee Members, Officers, contract employees, volunteers, or league members from threatening or insinuating, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's submission to or rejection of sexual advances will in any way influence any personnel decision regarding that employee's wages, assigned duties, evaluation, career development, or any other condition of employment.

### **Racial, Religious, or National Origin Harassment**

Racial, religious, or national origin harassment deserves special mention as well, and is expressly prohibited by AWSL. Racial, religious, or national origin harassment includes any verbal, written, or physical act in which race, religion, or national origin is used or implied in a manner which would make a reasonable person uncomfortable in the work environment or which would interfere with the person's ability to perform the job. Examples of race, religious or national origin harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- jokes, which include reference to race, religion, or national origin;
- the display or use of objects or pictures which adversely reflect on a person's race, religion, or national origin; or
- use of derogatory or demeaning language regarding a person's race, religion, or national origin.

### **Child Sexual Abuse**

Any sexual activity with a child is prohibited. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception, or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

## **Sexual Misconduct**

Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority is prohibited. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative. This section does not apply to a pre-existing relationship between two spouses or life partners.

## **Emotional Misconduct**

Emotional misconduct in all forms is prohibited. Emotional misconduct is a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to another person. Non-contact behaviors include verbal acts, physical acts, or acts that deny attention or support; or any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect). Emotional misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athletic performance.

## **Physical Misconduct**

Physical misconduct in all forms is prohibited. Physical misconduct is defined as contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threatens to cause physical harm to another person; or any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault). Physical misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athletic performance. For example, hitting and punching are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports but have no place in soccer.

## **Bullying**

Intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership are prohibited. Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion.

## **Hazing**

Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members are prohibited. Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion.

## **Procedures for Complaints, Investigations and Corrective Action**

All Personnel are responsible to help ensure that we avoid misconduct. AWSL cannot act to eliminate misconduct unless it has notice of the conduct. AWSL Executive Committee and employees shall report any concerns regarding compliance with the Safe Soccer Framework. For the avoidance of doubt, in some instances, Covered Personnel will be required to report to law enforcement and/or the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

Furthermore, AWSL Executive Committee, Contract employees, volunteers and members are responsible to help assure that the work environment, on or off-premises, is free from harassment. All employees have an obligation to promptly report any and all allegedly harassing conduct they are the subject of, that they learn of, or that they witness. Our Policy provides for immediate notice of problems to the persons designated in this Policy so that we may address and resolve any problems as quickly as possible.

An employee must report the harassing conduct to either:

- The person to whom you report (AWSL President);
- The AWSL Judicial Committee;
- Other Members of the Executive Committee;
- The U.S. Soccer Integrity Hotline: 312-528-7004

If the employee feels uncomfortable going to his or her supervisor with the complaint, he/she must report the matter to any other League member as designated above.

This Policy does not require reporting the misconduct to any individual who is creating the harassment or discrimination.

All Covered Personnel have an obligation to cooperate in any investigation of a complaint of misconduct, including providing any and all information concerning the complaint. Failure to do so may be a violation of this Policy.

### **Training and Education**

Employees and other Covered Personnel that have constant contact with athletes under the age of 18 must successfully complete the U.S. Center for SafeSport training or refresher course every year. The U.S. Center for SafeSport training can be accessed at <http://training.safesport.org/>.

### **Investigation/Adjudication of Sexual Abuse or Misconduct**

The investigation and adjudication of matters involving allegations or reports of sexual abuse or misconduct by or against Covered Personnel, or other violations of this Prohibited Conduct Policy that involve prohibited conduct that is reasonably related to and accompanies an alleged violation involving sexualized behavior by Covered Personnel are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States Center for Safe Sport (USCSS) in accordance with the requirements of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and as set forth in the applicable SafeSport policies and consistent with U.S. Soccer Bylaw 212 and TSSAS Policies, Constitution and Bylaws.