



<b>Policy Name:</b>	Harassment / Abuse Prevention Policy		
<b>Policy Number:</b>	008		
<b>Policy Approval Date:</b>	September 10, 2018	<b>Policy Review Date:</b>	September 9, 2019
<b>Policy Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to protect our children participants from verbal, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, while also reducing risk and liability.		
<b>Policy Scope:</b>	This policy applies to all members of Edmonton Scottish United Soccer Club.		
<b>Policy Statement:</b>	It is the policy of the Edmonton Scottish United Soccer Club that there shall be no harassment, abuse or bullying of any athlete in any of its programs. The Club and its Board of Directors expect every parent, volunteer, coach and staff member to take all reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of its athletes and to protect them from any form of maltreatment.		
<b>Definitions:</b>	<p>Harassment, abuse and bullying is any behavior - verbal, nonverbal, physical or sexual - that causes another to feel intimidated, offended, embarrassed and/or humiliated. Harassment denies the dignity and respect of individuals. It is not an accepted behavior towards anyone in Scottish United Soccer Club, be they athlete, coach, director, administrator, volunteer or parent.</p> <p>The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Unwelcome jokes, innuendo or teasing about a person's body, looks race, sexual orientation etc.</li><li>● Condescending, patronizing, threatening or punishing actions which undermine self-esteem</li><li>● Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, or may endanger a person's safety</li><li>● Degrading or inappropriate hazing rituals</li><li>● Unwanted or unnecessary physical contact including touching, patting, pinching etc.</li></ul> <p>Abuse can be verbal, emotional, physical and sexual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Verbal Abuse is recognized as negative communications that ridicule or put down another. Coaches are expected to conduct practices and games without engaging in verbally abusive language. Parents and players are also expected to abide with this.</li></ul>		

- Emotional Abuse is broadly defined as behavior that attacks a child's self-worth. This includes statements that purposely hurt feelings, or make fun of others.
- Physical Abuse are physical actions that hurts someone that is not a part of the sport. This may include, but is not limited to, hitting, shaking, or kicking a participant.
- Sexual Abuse is either unwanted physical contact, offensive verbal / non-verbal communication (e.g. through text message or social media), sexualized attention or sexual contact with a minor.

**Duty to Report:**

Alberta has a mandatory reporting law regarding the abuse and neglect of children and youth. Consequently, it is the policy of Edmonton Scottish United Soccer Club that any Scottish United personnel (coach, staff, administrator, director, volunteer or athlete), or parent or guardian, who has reasonable grounds to suspect that an athlete is or may be suffering or may have suffered from harassment, abuse or bullying shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the proper individuals / groups / law enforcement agencies (Coach, Parent, Child and Family Services or the local Police Detachment).

**Guidelines:**

Coaches

- Coaches have the duty and responsibility to establish and maintain an athletic environment free of harassment, abuse and bullying of or between athletes.
- Coaches have a duty and responsibility to take seriously all incidents or complaints of harassment, abuse and bullying.
- Coaches will have the opportunity to pursue training and educational experiences that enhance coaches' understanding of issues surrounding harassment, abuse and bullying.

Athletes

- An athlete should be encouraged to immediately report an incident he/she believes is a form of harassment, abuse or bullying either by a coach or teammate.
- An athlete should feel free of any reprisals as a result of reporting harassment, abuse or bullying.
- Athletes should feel confident that a report of harassment, abuse or bullying will be listened to carefully and taken seriously.
- Athletes being harassed, abused or bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play in a safe environment which allows their development as an athlete and individual.

**Harassment, Abuse and Bullying Complaint Procedures:**

A person who experiences harassment, abuse or bullying is encouraged to make it known to the alleged abuser that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive and contrary to the policies of the Club. If confronting the alleged abuser is not possible, unsafe or if after confronting the alleged abuser, the

abuse continues, the complainant should report it to the President of Edmonton Scottish United Soccer Club, or in his/her absence, their designate.

If the initial request by the alleged victim to the alleged abuser to stop the harassment, abuse or bullying is not successful, the alleged victim or parent may put the complaint in writing and submit it via email to [bod@scottishunited.com](mailto:bod@scottishunited.com).

Once contacted by the complainant, the role of the President is to serve in a neutral, unbiased capacity in receiving the complaint, and where appropriate assisting in its informal resolution.

The President may elect to turn the complaint over to the Discipline Committee for resolution.

All coaches, athletes, volunteers and employees of the Edmonton Scottish Soccer Club are encouraged to come forward with complaints of harassment, abuse and / or bullying. Those reports will be handled in accordance to the 'Complaint Procedure.'

#### **Complaint Procedure:**

There are three possible outcomes from a meeting of the Complainant and the President (or Designate) which may then go to the Discipline Committee for review. A written report will be provided to the Board:

- It may be determined by the President or his / her designate that the conduct does not constitute harassment, abuse or bullying as defined in this policy, in which case the matter will be closed;
- The Complainant may decide to pursue an informal resolution utilizing appropriate mediation techniques and strategies which will negotiate or mediate an acceptable resolution of the complaint; or
- The Complainant may decide to file a formal written complaint, in which case the President (or Designate) will receive the written complaint and advise the Board of Directors of the Club who will appoint an independent individual to conduct an investigation of the complaint. The 'Investigator' will carry out the investigation in a timely manner and at the conclusion of the investigation will submit a written report to the President or designate, which will include a recommendation that:
  - No further action is taken because the complaint is unfounded or the conduct has failed to be determined as behavior which falls within Club definition of harassment, abuse and/or bullying.
  - The complaint has merit and should proceed to a hearing.

Within 10 business days of receiving the written report of the Investigator that recommends that there be a hearing, the President or designate, will convene a 'Panel' of the Board to hear the

complaint. The 'panel' shall consist of a minimum of 3 Board members, of which one must be a member of the Discipline Committee. A written response must be made to the Complainant within 10 business days from the date it was received.

**Hearing:**

The 'panel' will hold the hearing as soon as possible, but not more than 15 business days after the panel has been appointed. The panel will govern the hearing as it deems appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

- Members of the panel shall select from among themselves a Chairperson;
- A quorum shall be all of the panel members (minimum of 3 members);
- Decisions shall be by majority vote where the Chairperson carries a vote;
- Both the Complainant and the Respondent will be given the opportunity to make oral and written submissions to the panel;
- The hearing shall be held in private;
- The parties shall be given 10 business days written notice of the day, time and place of the hearing;
- The respondent shall receive a copy of the formal complaint;
- The Complainant and the Respondent shall each receive a copy of the Investigator's report';
- Both the Complainant and the Respondent must be present at the hearing to respond to the Investigator's report, and able to respond to questions the Panel may have;
- The Investigator may attend the hearing at the request of the Panel.

**Decision:**

As soon as possible but within 10 business days of the conclusion of the hearing, the Panel will provide its written decision to the President or designate, with a copy provided to both the Complainant and the Respondent. The decision will contain:

- A summary of the relevant facts;
- A determination as to whether the acts complained of constitute harassment, abuse or bullying as defined in the policy;
- Disciplinary action against the Respondent, if the acts constitute harassment, abuse or bullying;
- In addition, the decision may contain measure to remedy or mitigate the harm or loss suffered by the Complainant, if the acts constitute harassment, abuse or bullying.

If the Panel determines that the allegations of harassment, abuse or bullying are false, vexatious, retaliatory or frivolous, its report may direct that there be disciplinary sanctions against the Complainant.

Unless otherwise decided, disciplinary sanctions directed by the Panel shall take effect immediately. The decision of the Panel will be final and binding upon the Complainant, the Respondent and the Club. Appeals to this process must be carried out according to the process outlined below.

**Appeals:**

Both the Complainant and the Respondent shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Panel. A notice of intention to appeal, along with the grounds for appeal, must be provided to the President of the Club within 72 hours of receiving the report. The notice must include the grounds upon which the decision is being appealed. Appeals may be made on the following grounds:

- The investigation was conducted in an unfair or biased manner;
- Panel members did not follow procedure as set out in this policy;
- Members of the Panel were unfair or unbiased
- Panel members reached a decision which could not be supported by the evidence as provided in the investigation;
- Panel members reached a decision which was grossly unfair or unreasonable.

The appeal shall be heard by an Appeal Board of three individuals appointed by the President of the Club, comprised of:

- One representative of the Scottish United Soccer Club Board;
- One representative of the Minor Soccer Association in which the Club competes;
- One outside individual not associated with the Club.

The decision of the appeal board will be based on a review of the documentation regarding the complaint, including the statements of the Complainant and Respondent, the report of the Investigator, the decision of the Panel and the notice of the appeal.

In deciding the Appeal, the Appeal Board may uphold the decision of the Panel, reverse the decision of the Panel and/or modify any of the Panel's recommendations for disciplinary action or remedial measures. The decision of the Appeal Board will be final and binding. A written response must be made within 10 business days from the date the decision is made.

**Record Keeping:**

The Club shall keep a secure record of the Panel report and any appeal proceedings. The record shall contain all relevant documents including but not limited to:

- A copy of the complaint or report;
- Responses to the complaint;
- Terms of reference of the investigation;
- Interim measures (if any);

- Witness statements;
- Investigator's report;
- Mediated solution (must be signed by both parties);
- Decision of the Panel;
- Sanctions imposed (if any);
- Any other related correspondence;
- Appeals (if any);
- Decision of the Appeal Board

To the extent possible, the above documents and documents resulting in a violation of the Harassment, Abuse and Bullying policy shall be held in confidence by Scottish United Soccer Club.

However, there may be circumstances where information may/must be shared which include but not limited to:

- When criminal conduct may be involved;
- When it is believed necessary to protect others from harassment, abuse or bullying;
- In the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency;
- To protect the interests of Scottish United Soccer Club;
- When required by law.

It is important to note that the Scottish United Soccer Club will not allow or pursue retaliation of any kind for reports or complaints, or for assistance or information provided to applicable authorities in connection with an investigation of harassment, abuse or bullying, where the reports or complaints are made or provided in good faith.

**Approved by: The Board of Directors -**