



2.12 AYSO Code of Conduct - Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, Abuse or Violence

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion AYSO commits fully to its founders' legacy of diversity, equity and inclusion. Providing fun and enriching soccer programs is what we do. We welcome everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social-economic position, ability or disability. Differences are respected and embraced. AYSO is proud to be at the heart of communities where all feel that they belong.

AYSO has a well-deserved reputation for quality youth soccer which is played in a safe, fair, fun, positive family environment as established by the expectations of AYSO in its governing documents and educational programs. Consistent with Child Protection laws and the SafeSport Act, AYSO prohibits all forms of child abuse, including emotional, physical, sexual, ethical abuse and neglect. As a mandated reporter, AYSO requires good faith reporting of suspected child abuse to local law enforcement agencies and the Safe Haven Department at the AYSO Office.

This Code of Conduct Policy supports AYSO's Vision, Mission and Philosophies by providing guidelines for AYSO entities to report, track and respond to inappropriate behavior for any incident that detracts from AYSO's stated beliefs and reputation, including but not limited to, any type of discrimination, harassment, abuse or violence. This Policy will cover incidents before, during and after an AYSO activity. Incidents that involve players or substitutes during a match are typically handled by the referee subject to further action pursuant to Region, Area, or Section procedures. All other incidents will be subject to this Policy.

Retaliation against persons who report discrimination, harassment, abuse, or violence, or who cooperate in any related investigation, is not acceptable. Reports of discrimination, harassment, abuse or violence, as well as any related investigation, will be kept as confidential as possible, consistent with the need to investigate any such report and comply with AYSO's policies, procedures and applicable laws.

Harassment and Discrimination

AYSO is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment of any kind. Therefore AYSO maintains a strict policy of prohibiting all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment including sexual harassment and harassment based upon sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical conditions), race, religion (including religious dress and grooming practices), color, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, sexual orientation, military or veteran status or any other basis protected by federal, state, and local law or ordinance or regulation. This policy applies to all persons considered to be members of AYSO in accordance with AYSO policies, procedures and guidelines and prohibits discrimination against or harassment of all members at any AYSO activity by any person, including spectators, vendors and visitors. This policy prohibits unlawful harassment in any form, including verbal, physical, visual, retaliation or threats or demands.

A player, volunteer or other person who believes they have experienced discrimination or harassment by any other person while at an AYSO activity should report the incident to the Regional Commissioner (RC), Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate (CVPA) or other AYSO board member designated by the RC to receive such complaints. The RC, CVPA, or other appointed AYSO board member will take reasonable care to ensure that all such claimed incidents are investigated and that any corrective or disciplinary action deemed warranted as a result of that investigation is imposed. The AYSO Safe Haven Department will work with the RC, CVPA, or other appointed AYSO board member as those persons work to investigate and resolve the issues raised by such incidents. RCs should immediately communicate any corrective or disciplinary action arising from such incidents to their Area Director. To the extent that any incidents occur at an Area or Section activity, then the Area or Section Directors will have such incidents investigated and resolved as set forth in this paragraph.

When an AYSO Region, Area or Section receives allegations of misconduct, it will undertake a fair, timely, thorough and objective investigation of the allegations. AYSO Regions, Areas and Sections are directed to reach reasonable conclusions about allegations of misconduct based on information obtained during any such investigation. AYSO volunteers investigating allegations of misconduct will make a good faith attempt to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible. However, AYSO volunteers investigating allegations of misconduct cannot promise complete confidentiality. The

obligation of AYSO volunteers to investigate and take corrective action may require the disclosure of information to individuals during the course of said investigation.

If the AYSO Region, Area or Section determines that harassment, discrimination, retaliation or other prohibited conduct has occurred, AYSO Regions, Areas and Sections are directed to take appropriate and effective corrective and remedial action in accordance with the information revealed by the investigation at issue. AYSO Regions, Area and Sections are also directed to take appropriate action to deter future misconduct.

Any AYSO member determined by any AYSO Region, Area or Section to be responsible for harassment, discrimination, retaliation or other prohibited conduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. AYSO members should also know that if they engage in unlawful harassment, discrimination, retaliation or other prohibited conduct, they can be held personally liable for such misconduct.

Harassment

AYSO prohibits all conduct that is considered to constitute harassment including but not limited to, making unwanted sexual advances and requests for sexual favors where either (1) submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of participation in an AYSO activity; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the participation of the individuals in an AYSO activity; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's performance as a player or volunteer or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Individuals who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate removal from the organization.

Harassment includes:

- Verbal conduct, such as epithets, derogatory comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments.
- Visual conduct, such as derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings or gestures.
- Physical conduct, such as assault, blocking normal movement or interference with an activity which is directed at a player or volunteer because of the player's or volunteer's sex or other protected characteristic.

- Threats or demands to submit to sexual requests in order to remain an AYSO member or to avoid some other loss, and offers of other benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Retaliation for having reported harassment.

A player, volunteer or other person who believes they have experienced harassment by any other person while at an AYSO activity should follow the reporting procedures described in 2.12.a above.

AYSO prohibits the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people on the grounds of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social-economic position, ability or disability. AYSO seeks to protect its members from all types of discrimination.

Volunteer Abuse, or Violence

An AYSO Region, Area or Section may take action toward individuals involved with AYSO who do not adhere to the behavioral standards described in this policy. All persons, adult and youth, may face disciplinary action for various offensive conduct, which conduct can generally be classified as minor, significant, major or extreme. Disciplinary actions that may be taken against such individuals set forth below in statement 7.4.

(a) Abuse

Abuse is described in AYSO Safe Haven Training and may include a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to an individual or the individual's property. Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts directed at an individual: using foul or abusive language that implies or threatens physical harm to the individual targeted by that language; spilling any beverage on an individual's personal property; spitting at (but not on) another individual.

(b) Violence

An intentional act of physical violence directed at or upon an individual, for purposes of this Policy, includes an act intended to cause the individual targeted to be fearful of injury to himself or herself, to a member of his or her family or to said individual's property or the property of said individual's family members. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.

Acts of violence also include, but are not limited to, the following acts committed upon an individual: hitting, kicking, tripping, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into an individual; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at an individual that could inflict injury; damaging the individual's clothing or personal property, e.g., car, equipment, etc. Acts of violence also include what is considered to be any type of criminal assault or battery by law enforcement authorities with jurisdiction over the location of the incident.

Acts of Violence May Result in Immediate Suspension

For acts of violence where physical contact was made, the police should be summoned and reports/charges filed. From an organization standpoint, automatic suspension of the offending member is desirable. A timely due process review shall be conducted in accordance with existing AYSO guidelines and policies, and sanctions should be imposed if warranted.

Method of Communicating Behavioral Issues

Misconduct by individuals may be communicated by players, volunteers, parents, and/or spectators to a board member of the AYSO Section, Area, Region sponsoring the activity, or to any other person believed to be an AYSO official. Referees and/or board or staff members shall complete and submit reports to their supervisory volunteer and any Incident Report prepared should be sent to the AYSO Office.