



US CLUB SOCCER POLICIES

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US CLUB SOCCER POLICIES

SECTION 1 GENERAL

Policy 1.01 Business Name. The National Association of Competitive Soccer Clubs shall conduct business under the name, US Club Soccer (hereinafter “Organization”).

Policy 1.02 Governing Documents. The Organization shall be governed by the NACSC Bylaws; these Policies; and the directives, forms, and procedures promulgated by the Organization administrative offices.

Policy 1.03 Definitions.

“Academy” means a soccer organization which is not a club, formed for the purpose of providing training to competitive players.

“Adult Player” means any player who is not a youth player, as defined herein. For purposes of this definition only, adult players also include professional players.

“Affiliate Member” means a US Club Soccer Member, such as an academy or league, which has qualified for affiliate, non-voting membership status.

“Allegation of Misconduct” means the written allegation form that is available from the Organization used to commence a disciplinary action against a club, team, or individual.

“Alliance Club” means a club which has been formed consisting of players from other Member Clubs.

“Club League” means a league consisting primarily of soccer clubs.

“Club Player Roster” means the official list of players that are registered with US Club Soccer on the Organization website.

“Competition Authority” means the individual or organization sanctioned to conduct a soccer competition, including a host Club, league, tournament administrator, or others.

“Competitive” means, in the context of a player, team, or club: selecting players via a tryout process, playing games outside the club, and aspiring to play at the highest competitive level in their area.

“FIFA” means the Federation Internationale de Football Association.

“Foreign Team” means a team, which is located outside of the 50 States and District of Columbia.

“Good Standing” means an Organization Member which has registered its players pursuant to Organization policies and rules, has paid all required dues and fees, has abided by the Bylaws, Policies, rules, and directives of the Organization, and is not subject to any disciplinary penalties by the Organization or The USSF, or has otherwise been determined to be in “bad standing”.

“Host Club ” means the Club, which is sponsoring or conducting a soccer tournament or other event.

“Involuntary Player Release” means the removal of a player from a Club player roster at the request of the Club.

“League” (or “Affiliate League”) means a group of 4 or more teams that join together for the purpose of inter-team play under a common set of administrative, competition rules, and an established game schedule that is not a club league.

“Member Club” means any Member in good standing of US Club Soccer, which is a soccer Club.

“Organization” means US Club Soccer. These terms are used herein synonymously.

“Organization Member” means any US Club Soccer Member in good standing.

“Player” means any youth player (unless it specifically references Adult Player) who is registered with US Club Soccer or another USSF-affiliated member.

“Recreational” means a player, team, or club, which does not meet the definition of competitive.

“Registration” means the process of a Member Club joining the Organization, or a player joining a Member Club, and complying with the Organization Policies and rules in doing so.

“Registration Year” means that time period in which a Club’s current Club Player Roster is valid.

“Soccer Club ” means a competitive soccer Organization, consisting of coaches, administrators, players, and teams formed for the purpose of developing player and coaching skills, providing training and competition for its players and coaches, and entering into soccer competitive competitions outside of the Club Organization. As long as it has competitive players and programs, for Organization membership purposes, a soccer Club may also consist of recreational or “select” players and programs. While the primary focus shall be outdoor soccer, Clubs may also participate in indoor soccer activities.

“State Association” means a youth or adult soccer organization, governing soccer in one state or a portion of a state, as defined by the Bylaws of The USSF.

“Suspension” means the temporary withdrawal of rights or a privilege afforded an Organization Member, or a player, coach, administrator, or other volunteer of an Organization Member.

“Team” means, for purposes of these Policies only, a group of soccer players playing on the same side in a soccer game, pursuant to FIFA Laws of the Game or other rules authorized for a specific competition.

“Tournament” means a soccer competition other than a league, conducted over a limited period of time with specific playing rules, which consists of more than 5 teams, and is organized by a host Member Club.

“Transfer” means the removal of a player from the player roster of one Club Member, and the contemporaneous addition of the player to the player roster of another Club Member.

“USSF” means the United States Soccer Federation, and is used synonymously with U.S. Soccer.

“U.S. Soccer” means the United States Soccer Federation, which is recognized as the national governing body for soccer in the United States by the United States Olympic Committee, and FIFA.

“U.S. Soccer-Affiliated Members” means Organizations that have been accepted as members by and are in good standing with the USSF, pursuant to the USSF Bylaws.

“Voluntary Player Release” means the removal of a player from a Club’s player roster at the request of the player.

“Youth Player” means any player who has not reached nineteen (19) years of age prior to August 1st during any registration year.

SECTION 2 ADMINISTRATION

Policy 2.01 Offices. *Reserved*

Policy 2.02 Administrative Boundaries. *Reserved*

Policy 2.03 Gender Neutrality. Any Policies, directives or other Organization rules shall be deemed to apply in the same regard to both the male and female gender.

SECTION 3 MEMBERSHIP

Policy 3.01 Club Membership. Any soccer Club, as defined by these Policies, which is organized in the United States, may apply for Club Membership if they will register players for competitive teams in at least 3 age groups.

(a) Clubs shall register with the Organization on an annual basis, pursuant to Policy 4.01.

(b) Individual teams may register only as part of a Member Club, a league affiliate member, or as a tournament team.

Policy 3.02 Recreational Players. The Organization will consider registering recreational players if they have a connection with either a Member Club with vertically integrated teams whose primary function is developing competitive level players, or with a sanctioned affiliate league. See Section 11 for recreational player rules.

Policy 3.03 State Boundaries. Clubs shall not be limited by local or state boundaries in registering players or conducting competitions.

(a) No travel permissions shall be required from the Organization for Club Members to attend events in other areas of the United States that are sponsored by other US Soccer-affiliated members. However, see Policy 10 for the applicable insurance requirements.

Policy 3.04 Affiliate Memberships. Soccer academies, Alliance Clubs, and leagues that are not formed as soccer Clubs may apply for non-voting affiliate status.

(a) Academies may apply for affiliate membership if they are formed for the purpose of providing special training to players from other soccer organizations, and while not prohibited from doing so generally do not field teams to compete in outside competitions. Academies must register a minimum of fifty (50) academy players with US Club Soccer to qualify for membership, which registration shall occur in the same manner as a Club. In some cases, the Organization may permit dual registration of an academy's and Member Club's players.

(b) Alliance Clubs may apply for affiliate membership if their purpose is to provide special training to players from a select group of other Member Clubs. Such players may form teams and enter outside competitions, with the permission of the player's regular Member Club. In such cases, players shall be dual registered to both the Member Club and Alliance Club.

(c) Leagues may apply for affiliate status pursuant to Policy 6.

(d) The Organization may establish a non-voting, individual affiliate membership category for interested and qualified individuals.

Policy 3.05 Tournament Team Membership. For purposes of participating in a Club Member-hosted tournament, a team which is not affiliated with a Club Member may, if necessary to participate, register for the tournament as a Tournament Team Member pursuant to Policy 7.03.

(a) Such membership is only valid for that particular tournament, and tournament teams shall have no voting rights. Each tournament entry is subject to a separate application and fee.

SECTION 4 CLUB AND PLAYER REGISTRATION

Policy 4.01 Registration Year. For purposes of Club and player registration, the Organization registration year shall be from August 1st to July 31st.

(a) Nothing herein shall preclude a Club Member from registering with another USSF-affiliated member in addition to the Organization, but see Policy 10 for the insurance coverage applicable to dual registration.

(b) Pursuant to US Soccer Policy, all Clubs, and their players, coaches, and administrators must register annually with the Organization.

(1) A player who registers for a Club during a registration year shall pay the registration fee for the entire year, and must re-register during the next registration year.

(2) A Player who reaches 19 years of age during a registration year shall be allowed to compete for his Club during that entire registration year.

Policy 4.02 Club Registration. Clubs shall register with the Organization in each registration year on the designated online form. The Club registration fee shall be established by the Board, which amount may, at the discretion of the Board, be credited against player registration fee monies that are due.

Policy 4.03 Player Rules. Rules for Organization players are found in the US Club Soccer Player Rules (Policy Attachment B).

SECTION 5 PARTICIPATION PERMISSIONS

Policy 5.01 Domestic Travel Permission. Permission for a Club Member in good standing to travel within the United States to participate in a soccer event hosted by an Organization Member or other USSF-affiliated member shall not be required. Notice of intent to travel may be required for certain activities.

Policy 5.02 Permission to Participate. To insure that insurance coverage is available and that the event is otherwise appropriate, permission must be obtained to participate in a soccer event, which is hosted or sponsored, by an individual or entity other than an Organization Member or USSF-affiliated member. A request to participate must be submitted to the Organization on the appropriate form at least 30 days prior to the event.

Policy 5.03 International Travel and Hosting Permission. Permission for a Club Member to travel outside the United States or to host foreign teams in the United States is processed and approved by the USSF National Office. USSF's international travel and hosting application forms can be obtained from the Organization office.

(a) A copy of the international travel or hosting application shall initially be submitted to the Organization office along with the required U. S. Soccer fee. The Organization will then forward the application to USSF. A Club must be in good standing to be granted such travel permission.

(b) Permission to undertake international travel is contingent upon the Club securing adequate participant medical insurance.

(c) Clubs, which are approved for international travel, must contact the appropriate officials in each country in which they will be traveling to determine what documents are required for entry and playing games.

SECTION 6 LEAGUE RULES AND SANCTIONING

Policy 6.01 League Sanctioning. The Organization will consider applications to sanction club leagues, and recreational and competitive leagues if the league consists of a minimum of four (4) teams. League sanctioning fees shall be established annually by the Organization Board.

(a) Teams that are not Club Members, but are members of other USSF-affiliated members, may apply to participate in the league by:

(1) Registering their team players with US Club Soccer, pursuant to the US Club Soccer Player Rules and paying the applicable player registration fees.

(2) Being accepted by the US Club Soccer and the league as a team that can reasonably be expected to compete at the league's competition level.

(3) Paying to the Organization an additional fee of \$25 per team, and agreeing to abide by all US Club Soccer Bylaws, Policies, and other Rules.

(b) Leagues will not be limited by state boundaries, and pursuant to Policy 5.01, no travel permissions will be required.

(c) The US Club Soccer player pass will be utilized and the Organization's player and Club insurance will apply for all league teams.

(d) All league players, coaches, and administrators shall be registered with the Organization at least one week prior to the commencement of league competition.

Policy 6.02 League Sanctioning Application. Any group of Member Clubs or other organization desiring to form a US Club Soccer-sanctioned league shall submit a fully completed league application at least 60 days prior to the proposed commencement of league play. The Organization may waive deadlines in cases that, in its sole discretion, are justified. Applications may be obtained on the US Club Soccer website, or from the Organization office.

(a) Among other information, the application shall contain the following information: name, address, and other information of the league administrator; source

and assignment of referees; League Member Clubs and teams; league fees (note fees are limited to an amount reasonably necessary to administer the league); and copies of all administrative forms and reports.

(b) Additional submittals shall include: the proposed schedule of games; bylaws and rules of the league; discipline procedures and committee; roster size, freeze, and other roster rules; and competition rules.

(c) In all league competitions, players shall utilize their Club player pass, and may play up to an older age group without restriction.

Policy 6.03 Application Review. The Organization shall review the application, and may ask for additional information before deciding on sanctioning.

(a) Approval is contingent upon the league administrator providing a sufficient level of administrative support including: serving as the point of contact with the Organization, overseeing competition and collecting game reports, assuring that competent referees are assigned, maintaining the schedule and league standings, assuring compliance with all league and Organization rules and procedures, and administering disciplinary matters.

Policy 6.04 Application Approval. League approval is conditioned upon the league and its member teams complying with all US Club Soccer Bylaws, Policies, Disciplinary Procedures, and other Rules.

(a) League sanctioning shall be for no longer than one playing season, not to exceed 12 months in time. Leagues must re-apply for sanctioning annually.

(b) At the end of the league season, the league administrator shall submit to US Club Soccer a league report in the designated format.

SECTION 7 TOURNAMENT RULES AND SANCTIONING

Policy 7.01 Tournament Sanctioning. Club Members in good standing may apply to US Club Soccer to sanction tournaments of 5 or more teams.

(a) The tournament application and agreement must be received from the host Club at least forty-five (45) days prior to the tournament, indicating number of projected teams, tournament fees to be charged, competition format, roster and playing rules, and other information requested on the application form.

(b) If approved, a report shall be submitted by the host Club within 30 days after the tournament, indicating teams attending and other information requested on the tournament report form.

(1) Any incident of alleged referee assault or abuse or other incidents of a violent or serious nature shall be reported to the Organization within 48 hours of the incident. The US Club Soccer Disciplinary Rules and Procedures shall be followed as applicable.

Policy 7.02 Non-Member Teams. A team, which is not affiliated with a Club Member, may participate in the tournament if it is a member of another organization, which is a USSF--affiliated member.

(a) Such team shall provide proof of travel permission, if such is required by the team's sanctioning organization, and proof of medical insurance coverage.

(b) If a non-member team cannot comply with subsection (a) above, it may attend the tournament if it registers as a US Club Soccer tournament team, and obtains medical insurance coverage through the Organization.

Policy 7.03 Tournament Teams. To apply as a tournament team, a non-member team shall contact US Club Soccer to determine the specific procedures. The Member Club tournament host is encouraged to help facilitate this process. The team shall register their players with US Club Soccer, and pay the required registration fees and insurance premium, and will then be qualified to participate in the tournament. The tournament team membership is only valid for the specific tournament at issue.

Policy 7.04 General

(a) Teams participating in a US Club-sanctioned tournament will not be limited by state boundaries, and pursuant to Policy 5.01, no travel permissions will be required.

(b) The US Club Soccer player pass shall be utilized for all Member Club teams, and Club players may play up to an older age group without restriction. The pass shall not be modified or marked upon in any way. Non-member teams may use their USSF Affiliate's player pass.

(c) Hosting foreign teams as part of a tournament is governed by Policy 5.03.

(d) It is anticipated that USSF-registered referees will be utilized for all tournaments. Tournament hosts shall provide information on the source and assignment of referees in the application.

(e) Tournament hosts Clubs should review and follow to as great an extent as practical the US Club Soccer Tournament Protocols, available as part of the tournament application.

(f) The tournament-sanctioning fee shall be determined by the US Club Soccer Board.

Policy 7.05 Club Host Sanctioning. A Member Club in good standing may host up to 3 other clubs (4 clubs in total) for the purposes of playing informal, competitive games at any time without submitting a tournament-sanctioning request or seeking other approval. Hosting more than 3 other clubs requires US Club Soccer approval, or completion of a tournament application. A notice on the designated form shall be submitted to the Organization at least 14 days prior to such hosting.

(a) No fee shall be charged for such game hosting, and Organization insurance shall apply for Member Clubs if the notice provisions have been met.

(b) No travel or other permissions shall be required. However, if a team that is not affiliated with a Member Club is planning to attend, proof that the team's medical insurance will be in effect for the event is required at the time of notice.

SECTION 8 TECHNICAL PROGRAMS AND COMPETITION RULES

Policy 8.01 Technical Director. The Organization shall hire a Technical Director who shall report to the Executive Director. He shall work closely with the Board and Technical Committee to assist Clubs in improving their technical and player development programs.

Policy 8.02 Technical Committee. A Technical Committee shall be appointed by the Organization Board to assist the Board and Technical Director in program development and implementation. Representation shall include individuals from boy's and girl's soccer programs, collegiate soccer, professional soccer, and the national teams' programs.

Policy 8.03 Roster Rules. Roster rules shall be established for each sanctioned competition and the Organization shall be informed of such rules on the appropriate request or notice form. The online Club Player Roster shall be accepted as an official roster for all US Club Soccer competitions.

Policy 8.04 Competition Rules. As a general rule, FIFA Laws of the Game shall be the competition rules that apply to all competitive team games. However, limited rule variations (i.e. substitutions, tie-breakers, etc.) may be established for each sanctioned competition. The US Club Soccer Technical Committee may choose to issue guidelines that all competitions are encouraged to adopt. The Organization shall be informed of competition rules to be utilized on the appropriate request or notice form.

(a) Substitutions *Reserved*

(b) All players must wear shin guards in any US Club Soccer sanctioned event. The FIFA Laws of the Game shall apply to other equipment restrictions.

Policy 8.05 Competition Protests and Appeals. Any protest arising out of a US Club Soccer sanctioned competition shall first be determined by the competition committee for that event, pursuant to its rules for such matters. After a determination, the party adversely affected may then file a protest appeal with the US Club Soccer Protest Appeals Committee. This Policy does not apply to disciplinary action against an individual or Organization Member, whether or not arising out of a competition. For such actions, see US Club Soccer Disciplinary Rules and Procedures (Policy Attachment C)

(a) The protest appeal shall be in writing on the designated form and mailed overnight or faxed to the Organization office, no later than 72 hours after the adverse ruling, and accompanied by a fee of \$150. If not on the designated form, while not fatal

to the right of appeal, the petitioner will be asked to complete the designated form. Only those Club coaches or team administrators directly involved in the matter may protest a competition matter.

(b) The Committee may speak to the parties involved, or ask for additional information, and shall then render a written decision as expeditiously as possible. An open hearing with all parties present shall not occur for competition protests. However, the Committee may, at its option, conduct a conference call of all interested parties.

(c) All protests regarding the field, the game, the published rules of competition or the competition administration shall be submitted to the referee and the competition committee before the game, unless the reason for the protest occurs during the game. Referee decisions related to the FIFA Laws of the game are final. The Committee shall not entertain protests of red or yellow cards or coach send-offs issued by a game referee.

(d) Any allegation of referee assault or abuse shall be forwarded directly to US Club Soccer and processed under the US Club Soccer Disciplinary Rules and Procedures (Policy Attachment C).

Policy 8.06 Travel and Training Documents

(a) Coaches or team managers should carry their player's proof of birth date to all competitions.

(b) Official rosters should be printed from the Club's official, online US Club Soccer player roster, and such rosters shall be accepted in any US Club Soccer-sanctioned competition.

(c) Coaches or team managers shall carry their player's original medical release and consent form to all competitions and training sessions.

SECTION 9 DISCIPLINE

Policy 9.01 Membership Termination. Termination of Club and other Organization Members is governed by Bylaw VII (1).

Policy 9.02 Removal from Office. Removal of Organization Officers and Board Members is governed by Bylaw X.

Policy 9.03 Organization Discipline. The Organization Board or its Discipline Committee shall have the authority to place an Organization Member in bad financial standing, suspend it from soccer activities, or fine such Member; or may suspend, fine, or declare ineligible a player, coach, or administrator for violations of Organization Bylaws, Policies, other Rules or directives, non-payment of monies due, or conduct detrimental to soccer or the Organization. The Executive Director of US Club Soccer may take the same actions, but is limited to an Organization Member fine of \$1,000 and an individual fine of \$250, and any suspension of rights or privileges to no more than 30 days. Bad financial standing, however, may remain in effect until the payment of

monies due. Rules for disciplinary hearings and appeals are contained in the US Club Soccer Disciplinary Procedures, which is Attachment C of these Policies.

Policy 9.04 Other Discipline. Organization Members may adopt and enforce their own disciplinary rules. Organization-sanctioned competitions shall adopt disciplinary rules and procedures for that competition. Appeals procedures from such discipline are set forth in Policy Attachment C.

(a) Discipline, which does not extend beyond the end of a tournament, shall not be appealable.

Policy 9.05 Discipline Reciprocity. Recognition of disciplinary actions imposed by other USSF-affiliated members shall be in accordance with USSF Bylaw 241.

Policy 9.06 Conduct Generally. Each player, coach, administrator, and other Club, league, and tournament personnel shall be primarily and solely accountable for the conduct of themselves, and the persons associated with them. Such organizations and individuals shall be subject to all rules pertaining to misconduct contained herein, including caution, ejections, and suspensions.

(a) Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a Club or team, such as relatives or spectators, shall also be subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the Organization. Club coaches or administrators shall be held responsible for the actions of any individual at any game who, in the opinion of the referee or competition authority, is a supporter of that Club or team.

(b) During any game sanctioned directly or indirectly by the Organization, a referee may stop the game and eject any coach, player, or spectator from the grounds (the field of play and areas surrounding the field on which the game is being played) if, in the opinion of the referee, the offender is guilty of violent conduct, serious foul play, or the use of foul or abusive language, or if the conduct is deemed to be interference by the offender as defined in FIFA Laws of the Game 5(d). At no time will foul or abusive language be permitted at any field. Alcohol or illegal drug use, or possession or transportation of a weapon without a valid permit, shall not be permitted at any time.

(c) For any incident of individual or Organization Member misconduct, including playing an ineligible player or another roster abuse, the league, tournament host, referee, or other competition authority shall file with the competition authority disciplinary committee a Competition Incident Report within 48 hours of the incident, or if warranted a written allegation (utilizing the Allegation of Misconduct Form). Except in the case of an assault or abuse of a referee, the original jurisdiction shall rest with the competition authority disciplinary committee.

Policy 9.07 Suspension Because of Litigation. Any person participating in any Organization-sanctioned or sponsored competition or event who becomes involved as a defendant in legal action detrimental to the welfare of youth players, or in legal action based on alleged activities detrimental to the welfare of youth players, shall be suspended by the Organization from all soccer-related activities until completion of such legal action. The person's status shall be reviewed by the Organization's Discipline Committee at the conclusion of the legal action. Matters detrimental to the welfare of

youth players shall include crimes of moral turpitude and felonies. The person has the right to appeal whether the matter, which is the substance of the accusation, if true, is detrimental to the welfare of youth players.

Policy 9.08 Protest and Appeals. Protests relating to the competition itself, rather than participant discipline arising from that competition, are found in Policy 8.05.

Policy 9.09 Disciplinary Procedures. Procedures for the administration of disciplinary matters is contained herein as Attachment C.

SECTION 10 INSURANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Policy 10.01 Player Medical Coverage. All registered US Club Soccer players, coaches, and administrators are covered by secondary medical insurance coverage for US Club Soccer sanctioned events, and for other events sanctioned by a USSF-Affiliated Member if coverage is otherwise not available through that Affiliated-Member. A copy of the medical claim form may be obtained by contacting the Organization office.

(a) Medical coverage applies when a player or staff has completed the registration process, as set forth in Attachment B, Rule 102, the applicable fees for that individual have been paid, and a passcard has been issued.

Policy 10.02 Dual Registration. In cases where a Member Club or its players are registered with the Organization and also with another USSF-Affiliated Member, the applicable insurance shall be determined by which Organization sanctions the event the Club team or player is participating in or training for.

Policy 10.03 Organization and Member Liability Coverage. Liability coverage for both the Organization and its Member Clubs shall be available through US Club Soccer. Member Clubs shall notify the Organization office of any lawsuit that is filed against it, or one of its coaches or administrators functioning in their capacity as a club employee, contractor, or volunteer. Any questions regarding liability coverage should be directed to the Organization office.

(a) Liability coverage applies to a Member when it has fulfilled the minimum requirements of membership. In the case of a Member Club, this shall be the registration of the Club and its acceptance by the Organization, and the registration and payment of fees for at least three (3) teams.

(b) Clubs may request a certificate of insurance by obtaining a form from the Organization office or from the US Club Soccer website.

Policy 10.04 Tournament Insurance. The Organization may, through its insurance carrier, make tournament insurance available to its Members in cases where it is desirable to insure all non-member tournament attendees. Such insurance will be optional for the tournament host and incur an additional premium cost.

Policy 10.05 Risk Management. The Organization is committed to a safe environment for its Members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. The

US Club Soccer Risk Management Policy has been adopted by the Board as Attachment A to these Policies.

(a) All club coaches and administrators shall comply with the Risk Management Policy prior to and during their participation in club activities.

SECTION 11 RECREATIONAL PLAYERS

Policy 11.01 Recreational Player Programs. Prior to Member Clubs or affiliate leagues registering any recreational players, the organization shall contact US Club Soccer and provide information on the nature of their recreational programs. For purposes of these Policies, whether an organization qualifies as a recreational program shall be reviewed on a case by case basis. Criteria among others include: age of the players, whether or not tryouts are held, whether small-sided games are played, if the group is part of a vertically integrated club program, if competition only occurs in house (i.e. only among the organization's teams). Any competition with other organizations, such as open tournaments, qualifies the team as competitive, and its players are required to be carded.

SECTION 12 ADULT PLAYERS

Policy 12.01 Adult Player Registration. Member Clubs and leagues may register adult players with US Club Soccer pursuant to the registration and insurance rules that are established. Clubs are encouraged to develop adult player programs, and the Organization will assist in that process.

US Club Soccer Risk Management Policy

Rule 101. Policy Guidelines

US Club Soccer is committed to providing a safe environment for its Members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every Organization Member and its personnel are responsible for protecting participants and ensuring their safety and well being while involved in sponsored activities.

To this end, the following guidelines of behavior and procedures have been adopted for US Club Soccer Organization Members, staff, volunteers and participants. All Organization Members, as well as parents, spectators and other invitees, are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

Violation of these guidelines may be used as a basis for an Organization Member or its staff's suspension or other disciplinary action, or a staff's disqualification from registration.

(1) Abuse of any kind is not permitted within the Organization. Physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators shall not be tolerated.

(2) Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, and any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within the Organization.

(3) Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.

(4) US Club Soccer is committed to providing a safe environment for players, participants and staff. Every Member of this Organization is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our Members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.

(5) US Club Soccer will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

(6) Each staff who is required to be carded shall also submit to an annual background check. Failure to submit a background check application before participating with US Club Soccer registered players, or falsifying the application in any way, shall be grounds for immediate suspension from US Club Soccer. The staff's Member Organization may also be terminated if they are aware of a staff falsifying an application.

MEMBER CONDUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

(A) US Club Soccer promotes good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourages qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers. It advocates building strong self-images among the youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

(B) Buddy System: It is recommended that every activity sanctioned by the Organization establish a "Buddy System". Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere--to the bathrooms, locker rooms, or other location- -without his or her buddy.

(C) To further protect youth participants, as well as coaches, officials and volunteers, it is strongly recommended that no adult person allow him/herself to be alone with a child (unless their own child) or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, it is recommended that coaches or other adult Members of this organization:

- Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car.
- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room.
- Private conversations with youth participants should occur within the view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of a private office.
- Coaches and other adult members of the organization should not socialize individually with participants outside of sponsored activities.

(D) Supervision/Chaperone ratio: It is recommended that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be 1:8, or 1 adults for every 8 children, with a minimum of 2 adults for every activity.

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

(F) No child should be left alone at a training session or at any other time until they are picked up by their parent, older sibling, or other designated adult.. It is recommended that the last adult in addition to the coach or trainer wait at the site as well until the child is picked up.

(G) We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes 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.

Rule 201. Staff Registration Obligations

All coaches and administrators who are required to register with US Club Soccer pursuant to Rules 105 and 106 of the US Club Soccer Player Rules shall, as part of that registration process, complete an annual risk management application, which can be accessed online via the US Club Soccer website. Failure to complete or falsification of the application can result in immediate disqualification or suspension.

Rule 202. Disqualification of Individuals

(1) The Organization may deny registration to and disqualify any individual, or deny Membership to or otherwise discipline any Club which continues to employ or utilize any individual who either fails to comply with these registration procedures, falsifies information, or as a result of such procedures is determined by the Organization to be unfit to continue in his current position, and is disqualified.

(2) The Organization may use any information and its absolute discretion in determining disqualification, but at a minimum such information can include conviction of any felony, gross misdemeanors, violation of these guidelines, or driving offenses, including loss of license, reckless driving, impaired driving, or a DUI

(3) Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by US Club Soccer 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.

(4) In addition, an individual's actions may give rise to a suspension instead of a disqualification under the Organization's Disciplinary Rules.

(5) The Organization and its members shall further comply with U.S. Soccer's Risk Management Bylaws, Rules, and Policies, including Bylaw 212, and Policies 212 and 601-10.