



**CONNECTICUT JUNIOR SOCCER
ATHLETE AND PARTICIPANT SAFETY POLICY**



**STATE
ASSOCIATION**



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CONNECTICUT JUNIOR SOCCER ASSOCIATION ATHLETE AND PARTICIPANT SAFETY POLICY

Connecticut Junior Soccer Association's Mission, Vision and Belief Statements

Mission:

The Connecticut Junior Soccer Association is committed to serve and educate its membership through the development, promotion, and administration of youth soccer in the state of Connecticut.

Vision:

CJSA supports US Soccer's efforts to make soccer the preeminent sport for *all children*, *creating a lifelong passion and love for the game*.

We Believe in:

- Leadership driven by *fair* play and *sportsmanship*;
- Affordable and *inclusive* player development;
- Commitment to *education* of coaches, referees and clubs;
- Promoting a *fun, safe* and *healthy* soccer environment.

Safety Above All

It is quite evident from our mission, vision and belief statements that our youth participant's health, safety and well-being are driving factors in all that we do and provide to our members. From the day a young child first registers to play all the way through their final years as a teenager, Connecticut Junior Soccer Association makes every effort to provide the best possible environment.

CONNECTICUT JUNIOR SOCCER ASSOCIATION ATHLETE AND PARTICIPANT SAFETY POLICY - STANDARDS FOR ORGANIZATION MEMBERS

Purpose

Consistent with U.S. Soccer Bylaw 212, Organization Members are required to, among other obligations, 1) comply with applicable law and, in particular, the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (the “**Sports Act**”); 2) if the member recruits, trains, fields or funds soccer players, establish a risk management program to promote the safety and protect the welfare of participants; and 3) adopt policies prohibiting sexual abuse. Effective February 14, 2018, Public Law 115-126, the *Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act* of 2017 (the “**SafeSport Act**”), amends the Sports Act, and requires applicable amateur sports organizations (as such term is defined in the SafeSport Act, 36 U.S.C. § 220530(b)) to:

- Comply with the SafeSport Act’s reporting requirements and prohibit retaliation by the applicable amateur sports organization against any individual who makes a report (36 U.S.C. § 220530(a)(1));
- Establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete who is a minor and an adult (who is not the minor’s legal guardian) at a facility under the jurisdiction of the applicable amateur sports organization (36 U.S.C. § 220530(a)(2));
- Offer and provide consistent training to adult members in regular contact with minor amateur athletes and, subject to parental consent, to members who are minors, regarding prevention and reporting of child abuse (36 U.S.C. § 220530(a)(3)); and

The purpose of the CJSA Athlete and Participant Safety Policy is to require an Athlete and Participant Safety/Safe Soccer program as part of each Organization Member’s risk management program and establish standards for such a program.

U.S. Soccer’s Bylaw Policy 212-3 (approved October 19, 2018)

The Connecticut Landscape

As you read the SafeSport Act and U.S. Soccer policy information the terms **Applicable Entity**, **Covered Organization** and **Covered Individual** are used. In a nutshell, in our soccer world, all of U.S. Soccer and all members (i.e. State Association, Youth Council Member) are considered an Applicable Entity and Covered Organizations. As a result, all clubs, town organizations, leagues, and other affiliated adults of State Associations and Youth Council Members (USYS,

US Club, AYSO, SAY, USSSA, etc.) are also considered an Applicable Entity and Covered Organization.

For the purposes of Connecticut Junior Soccer Association and our member organizations (all Covered Organizations) a Covered Individual is defined as “an adult who is authorized, by a national governing body, a member of a national governing body, or an amateur sports organization that participates in interstate or international amateur athletic competition, to interact with a minor or amateur athlete at an amateur sports organization facility or at any event sanctioned by a national governing body, a member of a national governing body, or such an amateur sports organization.”

CJSA has adopted the definition of an “Adult”, to be “Every adult (persons 18 years old and older) associated with all organizations who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children.”

Matching this definition with the requirements of the SafeSport Act, all Adults as defined above are now considered Covered Individual under SafeSport are required to comply with the forthcoming policies, rules, procedures and compliance. The term “Participating Adults”, for the purposes of CJSA, applies to all Adults as defined in the paragraph above.

Using the above requirement of all adults who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children, the following individuals are required to register as Adults, satisfy Background Screening, complete all SafeSport and U.S. Soccer Abuse Prevention training, and are now considered Mandatory Reporters. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Coaches (all types)
- Team Managers, including designated team parents assigned team management responsibilities
- Board members (Officers, Directors, Administrators, Committee Chairs, Appointees, etc.)
- Referees (Note: All USSF Referees will complete their full background checks and screening registration through the Connecticut State Referee Committee).
- Trainers (Permanent or Temporary)
- Volunteers
- Organization Employees
- Concession Workers
- Tournament Organizers, Employees, Volunteers
- And, any other person age 18 or older who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children.

SafeSport Policy Statement:

Per the SafeSport Act, each Organization Member that is an “Applicable Entity” or otherwise has adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors (in each case, a “Covered Organization”), must ***maintain, as part of that risk management program, an athlete and participant safety program*** that includes the six components listed below.

To allow Organization Members adequate opportunity to ensure policy changes and compliance, the required policies must be issued by February 14, 2019, and procedures and communications regarding these requirements must be issued in a manner calculated to effect compliance on or before September 1, 2019, but are nonetheless urged to complete compliance as early as practicable. Effective September 1, 2019 any Organization Member not in compliance with this Policy 212-3 will be subject to enforcement as provided in Section 6, below.

1. Prohibited Conduct Policy

Covered Organizations and other Organization Members that qualify as an amateur sports organization under 36 U.S.C. § 220501(b)(3) must implement and enforce a policy or code of conduct that prohibits misconduct including bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, and sexual misconduct, as those terms are defined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport’s SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements (the “**SafeSport Code**”). See www.safesport.org for more details on the code.

The Connecticut Junior Soccer Association’s Prohibited Conduct Policy is located at Appendix A to this Policy document.

This policy must apply to all activities under the Organization Member’s jurisdiction and at least to (1) Organization Member employees and board members; (2) the members of such Organization Member; (3) amateur athletes who are minors or referees who are minors (collectively, “**Youth Participants**”); and (4) *any* adult individuals the Organization Member authorizes, approves or appoints to have regular contact with Youth Participants (“**Participating Adults**”). This policy must also prohibit retaliation against individuals making good faith reports of misconduct.

Connecticut Junior Soccer Association Prohibited Conduct Policy includes the above categories in addition to our broader group of all adults who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children of Youth Participants as covered individuals who must all comply with our policy.

NOTE: Youth Participants expressly includes referees who are minors. In addition, Participating Adults includes, but is not limited to, coaches and all SYRAs and any referee program-affiliated personnel, including without limitation assigners, having regular contact with Youth Participants.

2. Appropriate Background Screening

Covered Organizations must implement and enforce a policy that requires appropriate background screening of at least Participating Adults by the earlier of 1) prior to regular contact with a Youth Participant; or 2) within the first 45 days of the Participating Adult taking on the role giving them access to Youth Participants.

At a minimum, the policy should include screening against applicable sex offender registries in the relevant state and a check against the Organization Member’s suspension database, U.S.

Soccer's disqualification list and the SafeSport disciplinary records available at: www.safesport.org.

3. Education & Training

Covered Organizations must implement and enforce a policy (1) requiring education and training designed to meet the Organization Member's obligations under the SafeSport Act to (a) Organization Member employees and board members and (b) Participating Adults, in each case as a condition to participation, and (2) subject to parental consent, offer and provide training to Youth Participants. The Policy should require the following:

A. Initial Training for Adults: Core Center for SafeSport Training

Pursuant to USOC and U.S. Center for SafeSport Policy, and as contemplated by the SafeSport Act, Covered Organization employees, board members and Participating Adults must be required to complete consistent training concerning child abuse prevention. These policies must require Participating Adults to complete either (1) the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Core SafeSport Training (i.e., the Center's online training or the Center's approved in-person training), and as applicable, follow-up refresher course training; or (2) similar training designed to meet the Organization Member's obligations under the SafeSport Act, with all continuing Adult Participants to receive initial training no later than September 1, 2019, and any new Adult Participants, effective no later than September 1, 2019, to receive initial training upon the earlier of:

- Before regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins, and
- Within the first 45 days of taking on the role giving them access to Youth Participants.

A Covered Organization may provide alternative training to the Core SafeSport Training, but it is strongly encouraged to use the Core SafeSport Training, and any alternative training is at the risk and responsibility of the Organization Member to ensure compliance with applicable law. If an Organization Member provides alternative training, it must not refer to such training as "SafeSport" Training.

Initial Connecticut Junior Soccer Abuse Prevention Training for Adults

CJSA is aware of several program options for awareness/prevention training of sexual abuse. CJSA supports the SafeSport Act by requiring all persons identified under this policy to take the program provided by the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

To enroll in this program, the you will first need to obtain the proper access code. To do so, you must send an email to safesport@cjsa.org. You will receive an email autoreply containing the access code.

After obtaining the access code copy or click on this url: <https://www.safesport.org/>. Once on the SafeSport site click on Sign in, click on Register. When prompted, make sure to select US Soccer as your NGB and then enter the access code provided in the email reply.

In order to complete your course registration, you will receive an email to confirm your email address. You must respond to this email to activate your account.

Set aside up to 90 minutes for the initial training course. Upon completion print out your certificate and keep on file.

IMPORTANT: You must use the legal name and the email address you use when conducting your CJSA Adult Registration.

B. Refresher Course(s) for Adults

In addition to the initial training, a refresher course is required on an annual basis effective the calendar year following the completion of the initial training. The U.S. Center for SafeSport's official refresher course is available as of October 1, 2018.

Annual Refresher Connecticut Junior Soccer Abuse Prevention Training for Adults

Connecticut Junior Soccer currently requires all Adults who are required to take the initial U.S. Center for SafeSport course to take the U.S. Center for SafeSport's official refresher course.

Refresher course is required on an annual basis to be completed by December 31 of the year following the year the initial course and subsequent refresher course was taken. Set aside up to 30 minutes to take the refresher course.

Example: If an Adult takes their initial course during 2019 they must complete their annual refresher no later than December 31, 2020. They may take the refresher anytime between January 1 and December 31 of 2020, no need to wait till a year expires

This is important as Connecticut Junior Soccer requires all risk management credential requirements to not expire during the soccer year (September to August). Adults will be able to take their annual refresher courses anytime between January 1 and August 15 in order to be ready to receive their credentials, assuming all other requirements are met, by the end of August

C. Training for Youth Participants

Covered Organizations must – subject to parental consent – offer and provide training annually to Youth Participants regarding the prevention of child abuse. Covered Organizations must track:

- A description of the training(s)
- The date the training(s) was offered and given
- A description of how the training(s) was offered and given.

Connecticut Junior Soccer Abuse Prevention Training for Youth Participants

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is developing training for Youth Participants. More information is expected to be available by mid-year 2019

4. Reporting

Covered Organizations must maintain a procedure for reporting misconduct to the Covered Organization and, to the extent required by the SafeSport Act, mandate reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities. The procedure should be clear that reporting may be made anonymously, and that no direct fees or other cost is involved in making a report. Each Covered Organization must also maintain a policy prohibiting retaliation against individuals making good faith reports of misconduct.

Connecticut Junior Soccer's Reporting Procedures

The Connecticut Junior Soccer Reporting procedures provide a mechanism that allows a complaint to be easily reported for a reasonable suspicion of Sexual or Physical abuse/neglect, within a 12 hour period of awareness. Federal regulations state that reports should be made to a) local law enforcement and b) local/state child protective services, c) US Soccer, and d) the US Center for SafeSport. EVERYONE IS A MANDATORY REPORTER.

Mechanism for Reporting – (Everyone listed below MUST be contacted when physical or sexual abuse is suspected)

- 1) State Department of Children and Families (DCF) 1-800-842-2288 (TDD: 1-800-624-5518)
- 2) Local Law Enforcement Number (recommended to post on club website and give to athletes and parents)
- 3) Your Clubs Risk Manager Contact Information (every club should have a point person for reporting)
- 4) State Association's Main Office - safesport@cjsa.org
- 5) National Governing Body (NGB)

US Soccer Integrity Hotline Number: (312) 528 - 7004

US Soccer: <https://www.ussoccer.com/integrity-hotline>

US Center for SafeSport: <https://www.safesport.org/report-a-concern>

Mechanism for Reporting (cont.): Other forms of misconduct such as emotional abuse, bullying, hazing, or harassment.

- 1) Club Risk Manager Contact Information (every club should have a point person for reporting)

2) Club or BOD Review/Hearing – There should be a process in place to document and address this other misconduct. The decision of the Club or BOD should be sent to the State Association’s State Office (safesport@cjsa.org)

CJSA member clubs and club personnel can access Mandated Reporters Training provided by Connecticut’s DCF in two different ways, one for individuals and one for group sessions:

- 1) The first, for individuals, is through an on-line training video produced and provided by the DCF and available via the internet. Any interested individual can gain access to the approved DCF video training (it takes about 60-90 minutes to complete) simply by completing a required DCF Inquiry Form available.

A link embedded in the form will take you directly to the training video after completion of required information.

- 2) A second way that is open to clubs who would like to provide a group training session to its members is to invite certified DCF personnel available across the State of Connecticut who will provide Mandated Reporters Training to any size group. This service through Connecticut’s DCF is available free of charge to CJSA club and district meetings upon request.

CJSA strongly encourages its member clubs to have ALL of its coaches, administrators and volunteers whether they are paid employees of the club or volunteers to take the time to learn as much as possible about this important issue and to take the Mandated Reporter Training at their earliest convenience. For more information about the work of DCF, please go to the DCF’s website.

For specific CJSA related questions on this issue, please contact CJSA.

5. Limiting One-on-One Interactions – Required Policies

Covered Organizations are required to establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between individual Youth Participants and any Adult Participant who is not their legal guardian (“Prevention Policies”). These procedures must include athlete prevention policies covering the topics below:

- One-on-One Interactions, including meetings and individual training sessions
- Massages and rubdowns
- Locker rooms, rest rooms, and changing areas
- Social media and electronic communications
- Local travel
- Team travel

Connecticut Junior Soccer’s Policies

Connecticut Junior Soccer Association's Required Policies are located at Appendix B to this Policy document.

A. Minor athletes who become adult athletes

A minor athlete that reaches the age of majority is not to subject to Prevention Policies in their capacity as an athlete, and when interacting with Youth Participants who are 16 or older. When this now age of majority athlete interacts with minor athletes 15 or younger all Prevention Policies will be in effect. Should a minor athlete reach the age of majority and then obtain a position that presents a potential power imbalance, such as becoming a coach, the individual is subject to athlete prevention policies.

B. Implementation

The mandatory components set forth in the model policies set a minimum standard. In implementing the required policies, a Covered Organization may choose to implement a policy that is stricter than the Model Policy, if it includes or is stricter than the mandatory component. *If, in implementing the required policies identified here, Covered Organizations are not in compliance with federal requirements, the organization must implement policies and procedures sufficient to meet such requirements.*

6. Enforcement

A. By Organization Members

Each Covered Organization and Organization Member that qualifies as an amateur sports organization under 36 U.S.C. § 220501(b)(3) must enforce its Athlete & Participant Safety Policy, consistent with the SafeSport Act. Specifically, violations of the policy must be subject to an appropriate grievance process that is materially free of bias and conflicts of interest, to address allegations of misconduct following the report or complaint of misconduct. This grievance process must include the opportunity for review by a disinterested individual or body and a right to appeal a final decision rendered by an Organization Member's process pursuant to U.S. Soccer Bylaw 704.

Connecticut Junior Soccer Association's Enforcement Policy

All violations of the Connecticut Junior Soccer Athlete & Participant Policy will be subject to the current Connecticut Junior Soccer Procedures for Disciplinary Actions and Appeals & Grievances and Complaints and Appeals

B. By U.S. Soccer

Pursuant to Bylaw 212, U.S. Soccer reserves the right to, either directly or through a contracted third party service provider, survey, audit, require certifications of compliance with, and otherwise review compliance by its Organization Members with this policy. Failure of any Organization Member to issue and implement the policies required by this Policy 212-3 will constitute a violation of Bylaw 212 Section 1.