

## G.E.S.L. HARASSMENT POLICY

The Greater Edmonton Soccer League (G.E.S.L.) does not tolerate or condone any degree of harassment by any Member\*<sup>1</sup> of the EIYSA. It is the responsibility of all EIYSA Members to promote and ensure a harassment free sport environment.

\*<sup>1</sup>Members of the EIYSA include (but are not limited to) EIYSA League Board of Governors, EIYSA Board of Directors, EIYSA Staff, Club Boards of Directors, Club Administrators, Club Staff Members and Volunteers, all Club Team Officials, all Players, all Parents/Guardians/Player Relatives, all Coaches and all Managers (regardless of if they are on a team roster or not).

Members shall all be deemed spokespersons of the EIYSA league and their respective Club(s). Regardless of the context, all EIYSA Members must not do anything that could harm the reputation of the EIYSA league or their respective Club(s) or otherwise bring the game into disrepute.

**MISSION STATEMENT: The EIYSA believes in the prevention of harassment and promotes a harassment-free soccer environment in which all people respect one another and work towards a common goal.**

Harassment can take many forms but generally involves conduct, comment or display in any form, including social media\*<sup>2</sup>, that is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, demeaning, belittling, malicious, degrading or would otherwise cause offence, discomfort or personal humiliation or embarrassment to a person or group of persons. This includes (but is not limited to) comments of a racial, sexist, sexual\*<sup>3</sup>, homophobic, anti-religious, or threatening nature. This includes (but is not limited to) negative comments about officiating. This includes (but is not limited to) dialogue that could disparage any Member, any opponent, or anyone generally within the wider soccer community. This includes (but is not limited to) solicitation of players in contravention of EIYSA's Player Recruitment Policy. This includes (but is not limited to) Harassment complaints, which are found to be false, frivolous or vexatious, or made in bad faith.

\*<sup>2</sup>SOCIAL MEDIA refers to freely accessible online tools used to produce, post and interact using text, images, video, and audio to communicate, share, collaborate, or network. Social media includes blogs, social networks, videos and photos file sharing, folksonomy<sup>1</sup> tagging, podcasting and vodcasting<sup>2</sup>, wikis and other similar tools.

The EIYSA recognizes and supports its' Members' rights to freedom of speech and expression including the use of \*<sup>2</sup>SOCIAL MEDIA. In this context, however, each Member must remember that playing and competing for the EIYSA is a privilege, not a right. All Members are deemed to represent the EIYSA and are expected to portray themselves, their team(s), their Club(s), the EISYA league, the ASA (Alberta Soccer Association) and the CSA (Canada Soccer Association) in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with League Guidelines\*<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A folksonomy is a system of classification derived from the practice and method of collaboratively creating and managing tags to annotate and categorize content;

<sup>2</sup> a [video stored](#) in a [digital form](#), or in a [form](#) that uses [signals](#) in the [form](#) of [numbers](#) that can be [downloaded](#) from the [internet](#) and [play](#) on a [computer](#) or other device.

The EISYA League encourages Members to use the following \*4GUIDELINES to ensure proper SOCIAL MEDIA behavior of all Members:

- Any online postings must be consistent with the EIYSA'S Harassment Policy.
- league related social media content.
- The EIYSA logo cannot be used without the EIYSA Board of Directors approval.
- All posted content is subject to review.
- The EIYSA encourages its' Members to use social media but reminds Members that at any time they are spokespersons of the EIYSA.

\*3SEXUAL HARASSMENT refers to unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual Harassment may occur in behaviors by males toward females or by females toward males, between males, or between females. The behavior does not need to be intentional for it to be considered Sexual Harassment.

### **HARASSMENT POLICY VIOLATIONS/PROCEDURES**

Any violation of the EIYSA Harassment Policy is subject to investigation and sanction by the EIYSA. The EIYSA **Harassment** Committee reserves the right to determine appropriate sanctions for any violation of this Policy including but not limited to fines, removal of objectionable social media material, member suspension or member expulsion. A database of case precedents will be maintained by the EISYA Board of Directors in order to ensure continuity and even-handed application of sanctions under this Policy. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Alleged violations under the EIYSA Harassment Policy shall be dealt with as follows:

(1) All EIYSA Member Clubs have an obligation to promote the plain interpretation as well as the spirit and intent of ALL EIYSA Policies, Rules and Regulations. The primary contact for all alleged Harassment Policy complaints is the respondent Member's Club President. If Club led mediation between the parties is either not adequately facilitated by one or both Club Presidents (or an approved delegate) or the outcome is not acceptable to either the complainant or the respondent, the matter will be referred to the EIYSA.

(2) The EIYSA shall appoint a **Harassment** Committee of three Member Club members for the purpose of reviewing and attempting to resolve complaints. All Member Clubs will have 3 members identified ready and able to sit on the **Harassment** Committee. **Harassment** Committee members shall recuse themselves from any hearings or decision-making processes involving any organizations(s) or individuals they are or have been affiliated with, or where they are otherwise unable to be objective and impartial in their decision making. The EIYSA **Harassment** Committee will meet the second Friday of each month to address any complaints received by the EIYSA. It is incumbent on all parties to attend their designated hearing date otherwise the matter will be laid over to the next regularly scheduled hearing and the matter will remain in limbo until such time as the hearing is convened. Where a Complainant or Respondent does not attend two consecutive hearing dates, the **Harassment** Committee will find in favor of the participant.

The Harassment Committee will open a secure file containing all of the relevant information in respect of a complaint and meet with the complainant (and Club representative if applicable ) and

the respondent (and Club representatives) at a hearing scheduled on the second Friday of every month. The Harassment Committee will interview the complainant and the respondent and/or all the individuals who may be able to provide relevant information. If the investigation reveals evidence to support the complaint of harassment, the harasser will be disciplined appropriately and at the Committee's discretion and in accordance with this Policy and precedent case material. If circumstances warrant, the Committee may refer these matters to the City of Edmonton Police Service, the Alberta Human Rights Commission or such other body or organization, as they deem appropriate.

For the purposes of this Policy, threats of retaliation and retaliation by one person against another:

- designed to dissuade an individual from reporting discrimination or harassment;
- to punish an individual who has rejected sexual advances;
- for having invoked this policy (whether on behalf of oneself or another);
- for having participated in any investigation under this policy; or
- for having been associated with a person who has invoked this policy or participated in these procedures;

will be considered a form of Harassment.

Complaints found to be false, frivolous or made in bad faith will not be tolerated and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action under the EIYSA Harassment Policy.

In addition to any other findings or sanctions imposed by the **Harassment** Committee, a finding of Harassment will be considered conduct likely to bring the game into disrepute under this EIYSA Policy. Once the matter has been resolved, the EIYSA Board will retain the file in a secure location (for 5 years) along with all of the other books and records of the EIYSA. No absolute confidentiality may be made by the EIYSA, particularly in circumstances where the matter warrants police or other regulatory or administrative body intervention.

Notwithstanding this policy, any person who experiences Harassment continues to have the right to seek assistance from the Alberta Human Rights Commission or to file a complaint with the City of Edmonton Police Service or such other body or organization as they deem appropriate.

(3) If the complainant or respondent do not accept the findings of the Committee, they are then encouraged to present the matter for consideration before the ASA (Alberta Soccer Association).