

## ***West Hants United Soccer Association***

### **Reporting and Documenting Complaints: Inappropriate Behaviour Policy**

At West Hants United Soccer Association, all children have the right to a safe and respectful environment that is free from inappropriate conduct. Any conduct of an employee/ volunteer that violates the Code of Conduct to Protect Children will not be tolerated. Any employee/volunteer engaging in such conduct will be subject to a range of disciplinary procedures up to and including dismissal (see Discipline/Suspension/Dismissal: Inappropriate Behaviour policy). Similarly, employees/volunteers who are aware of breaches of the Code of Conduct to Protect Children, but fail to report the information and take other appropriate action as reasonable in the circumstances, may be subject to discipline.

West Hants United Soccer Association is committed to:

- Ensuring that prompt action is taken in regard to allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour.
- Ensuring we create an environment that encourages reporting.
- Treating all allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour as confidential.

#### **PURPOSE**

Child-serving organizations are committed to providing safe and nurturing environments; however, because they work with children, they are vulnerable to attracting employees/ volunteers who want to access and sexually abuse children or who may have inappropriate boundaries and relationships with children.

#### **WHY IS THIS POLICY IMPORTANT?**

Organizations must have internal reporting procedures regarding the following types of incidents:

Misconduct:

- An employee/volunteer's inappropriate behaviour towards a child or children.
- The action taken by the organization will depend upon the nature of the incident; however, it is important for the organization to distinguish between illegal behaviour and inappropriate behaviour and establish appropriate reporting procedures for each.

#### **PARAMETERS**

This policy applies to all employees/volunteers of West Hants United Soccer Association including full-time, part-time, contract, temporary, or casual employees.

Our policies and procedures, and the Code of Conduct to Protect Children, defines inappropriate behaviour. Employees/volunteers are required to immediately report all inappropriate behaviour they witness or allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour they learn about. If you are in doubt as to whether a behaviour is inappropriate, you must report the behaviour to your Supervisor/administrator/president to enable the Supervisor/ administrator/president to make an assessment.

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### **PROCEDURE**

Employees/volunteers:

1. If the child is the one conveying the information about inappropriate behaviour:
  - a) Treat the information seriously and reassure the child (if appropriate).
  - b) Report immediately to your Supervisor/administrator/president.
  - c) Document the information provided on Incident Report Form.
2. If you witness something that you believe may be inappropriate behaviour:
  - a) Do what you can to stop or interrupt the behaviour or situation causing the concern, to the extent you are able to do so without unreasonably jeopardizing your safety or the safety of the child involved. If you do not know the child or adult involved, take reasonable steps to identify the party you do not know and/or to note any identifiable features that may help to identify him/her.
  - b) Report immediately to your Supervisor/administrator/president.
  - c) Document what you have witnessed and what steps (if any) you took to stop or interrupt the behaviour on Incident Report Form.
3. If the information is being conveyed through another source (third party, another employee, another volunteer):
  - a) Treat the information seriously.
  - b) Document the information you have received on Incident Report Form.
4. Keep the information confidential.
5. **Do not attempt to determine the accuracy of the information. A process of information gathering will ensue once your Supervisor/administrator/president is made aware of the information or concern.**

Supervisor/administrator/president:

1. Consult with the President and if they cannot be reached, then the Vice President and if they cannot be reached, then the Secretary of the Organization, and determine whether follow-up on the concern is warranted.
  - a) Document determination on Incident Report Form for the President and if they cannot be reached, then the Vice President and if they cannot be reached, then the Secretary of the Organization:
1. Meet with employee/volunteer who allegedly behaved inappropriately to discuss the information received.
  - a) Tell the employee/volunteer about the information received without disclosing the source (wherever possible).

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- b) Ask the employee/volunteer to share his/her version of events.
  - c) Document the discussion on Incident Report Form.
2. Seek legal counsel and/or consult with an HR professional.
  3. If applicable, follow steps from the Discipline/Suspension/Dismissal: Inappropriate Behaviour policy (page number to be inserted when complete).
  4. Document the outcome on Incident Report Form.

### **OTHER MATTERS OF NOTE**

#### **Interference with the Conduct of an Internal Inquiry into Inappropriate Behaviour**

A threat or promise made to discourage the reporting of information about inappropriate behaviour in accordance with this policy, or any interference with the organization's follow-up discussions regarding information received about inappropriate behaviour, including an attempt to have any such information withdrawn, is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

#### **Confidentiality**

All information related to inappropriate behaviour will be handled in confidence. We will not disclose the identity of any parties involved, or the circumstances, except where necessary for the purpose of follow-up or corrective action, where required by law, or for the protection of individuals. Similarly, employees/volunteers interviewed as part of the follow-up process shall treat all information in a confidential manner.

An employee/volunteer who breaches confidentiality may be subject to discipline. A copy of the documented incident shall be placed in the accused employee/volunteer's human resource file and parents shall be alerted where appropriate and/or necessary pursuant to existing laws and/or information shall be shared with relevant child protection authorities in your province. Any identifying information about the child victim or reporting person shall be removed from this copy. A generic letter shall also be placed in the file that indicates the alleged offence, how it was handled and any follow-up that was completed.