



West Seattle Reign Sports LLC  
ATHLETE PROTECTION  
HANDBOOK

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## INTRODUCTION

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC is committed to improving the development, safety and welfare of athletes and participants involved in sports. There are a lot of reasons to play sports – at any level. A life-long activity, people often play sports to have fun and spend time with friends. Sports also encourage a healthy lifestyle, builds self-confidence; athletes also do better off the field. They learn goal setting, teamwork, and time management skills. Athletes are less likely to use cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol; they have higher graduation rates and are more likely to attend college.

Here, we identify six types of misconduct: emotional, physical, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing. All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Youth Protection Handbook.

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC publishes this handbook as a resource to guide the development, implementation and internal review of effective athlete welfare and misconduct prevention strategies for WSR leadership and its members.



SCREENING STAFF MEMBERS AND/OR  
VOLUNTEERS

#### APPLICANT MEMBERSHIP SCREENING

WSR members (coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff) must consent to, and pass, a formal applicant screening process before becoming a member of West Seattle Reign Sports LLC.

#### AFFIRMATIVE DUTY TO DISCLOSE

If, during the course of employment or membership with West Seattle Reign Sports LLC, a WSR member (coach, event organizer, volunteer, and staff) is accused, arrested, indicted or convicted of a criminal offense against a child, it is the duty and responsibility of the WSR member to notify the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office.



## *ATHLETE PROTECTION GUIDELINES*

## COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

### OVERVIEW

In the event that any WSR member (coach, event organizer, volunteer, and staff) observes inappropriate behaviors, suspected physical or sexual abuse, or sexual misconduct, it is the personal responsibility of each person to immediately report (same day) his or her observations to local law enforcement and the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office.

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes' physical, emotional, and social development and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

**WSR members (coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff) should not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities.** Instead, it is the responsibility of each person to immediately report suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to the local law enforcement authorities and the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office.

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes will vary with each coach and athlete, but it is nevertheless important for everyone involved in WSR sports to support the use of motivational and training methods that avoid misconduct.

### APPLICATION

These Guidelines apply to

- WSR members (coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff)
- WSR athletes and participants

Coaches, event organizers, volunteers, staff members, athletes and participants shall **refrain from child physical or sexual abuse; bullying, harassment, and hazing; and emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct.**

### PROHIBITED CONDUCT

#### SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception, or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Child sexual abuse involves any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. Sexual contact between minors also can be abusive. Approximately 1/3 of all child sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other children and the obligation to report extends to peer-to-peer child sexual abuse. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power and/or intellectual capabilities.

## MISCONDUCT

Misconduct refers to conduct and behaviors that are considered harmful to the psychological and physical health of athletes and other participants, regardless of age. The six individual forms of misconduct described below – emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment, and hazing – are considered misconduct regardless of intent.

### EMOTIONAL MISCONDUCT

(1) A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behaviors include:

- a. verbal acts
- b. physical intimidation
- c. acts that deny attention or support

(2) Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).

#### Exception

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

#### Examples

Examples of emotional misconduct prohibited by this Guideline include, without limitation:

(1) **Verbal Acts.** A pattern of verbal behaviors that (a) attack an athlete personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat or disgusting) or (b) repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular participant or participants in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.

(2) **Physical Intimidation.** A pattern of physically aggressive behaviors, such as (a) throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, participants; or (b) punching walls, windows, or other objects.

(3) **Acts that Deny Attention and Support.** A pattern of (a) ignoring an athlete for extended periods of time or (b) routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice.

### PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT

(1) Contact or non-contact behaviors that result in, have the potential to, or threaten to cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants; or

(2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., child abuse, child neglect, assault).

#### Examples

Examples of physical misconduct prohibited by this Guideline include, without limitation:

(1) **Contact offenses.** Behaviors that include: (a) punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete; (b) intentionally hitting an athlete with objects or sporting equipment; (c) providing alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law); (d) providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any athlete; (e) encouraging or permitting an athlete to

return to play pre-maturely following a serious injury, such as a concussion, and without the clearance of a medical professional; (f) prescribed dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete.

(2) **Non-contact offenses.** Behaviors that include: (a) isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space); (b) forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface); (c) withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.

#### Exceptions

Physical misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching, and kicking are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in swimming.

#### SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

(1) Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner

(2) Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct, or indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative

(3) Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape)

**Note: An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete.**

Sexual misconduct includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and any other sexual intimacies that exploit an athlete. **Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult**, and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

#### Examples

Examples of sexual misconduct prohibited under this Guideline include, without limitation:

(1) **Touching offenses.** Behaviors that include:

(a) fondling an athlete's breasts or buttocks

(b) exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors

(c) genital contact

(d) sexual relations or intimacies between participants in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants

i. **Authority and Trust.** Once the unique coach-athlete relationship is established, the authority and trust on the part of the coach over the

athlete shall be assumed, regardless of age. Accordingly, sexual interaction or intimacies between a coach and an athlete or other participant are prohibited, regardless of age, both during coaching and during that period following coaching when the imbalance in power could jeopardize effective decision-making.

- ii. **Imbalance of Power.** Factors relevant to determining whether there is an imbalance of power include, but are not limited to: (a) the nature and extent of the coach’s supervisory, evaluative or other authority over the athlete being coached; (b) the actual relationship between the parties; (c) the parties’ respective roles; (d) the nature and duration of the sexual relations or intimacies; (e) the age of the coach; (f) the age of the athlete or participant; (g) and whether the coach has engaged in a pattern of sexual interaction with other athletes or participants.

- (e) sexually oriented comments, jokes, or sexual innuendos made to or about an athlete, or other sexually harassing behaviors
- (f) a coach discussing his or her sex life with an athlete
- (g) a coach asking an athlete about his or her sex life
- (h) coach requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to athlete
- (i) exposing athletes to pornographic material
- (j) sending athletes sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g., “sexting”)
- (k) deliberately exposing an athlete to sexual acts
- (l) deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared)
- (m) sexual harassment: specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and
  - i. is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the offending individual knows or is told this
  - ii. is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context

#### Bullying

- (1) An intentional, persistent, and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation, or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership
- (2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law

#### Exceptions

Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normal team behaviors, or (b) promote a team environment. Bullying also does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen.

## Examples

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Guideline include, without limitation:

- (1) Physical behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete; (b) throwing at, or hitting an athlete with, objects such as sporting equipment.
- (2) Non-Physical behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) teasing, ridiculing, intimidating; (b) spreading rumors or making false statements; or (c) using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate, or humiliate (“cyber bullying”).

## Harassment

- (1) A repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that (a) are intended to cause fear, humiliation, or annoyance, (b) offend or degrade, (c) create a hostile environment or (d) reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability
- (2) Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law

## Examples

Examples of harassment prohibited by this Guideline include, without limitation:

- (1) **Physical offenses.** Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete or participant; (b) throwing at or hitting an athlete with objects including sporting equipment
- (2) **Non-physical offenses.** Behaviors that include (a) making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete’s sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits; (b) displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; (c) withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her sexual orientation.

## Hazing

- (1) Coercing, requiring, forcing, or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group’s members
- (2) Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law

## Exception

Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion. Examples include, without limitation:

- (1) allowing junior athletes to carry senior athletes’ equipment into the locker room after practice
- (2) encouraging junior athletes to arrive early and set up training equipment
- (3) giving senior athletes first preference in team assignments, responsibilities, accommodations, facilities, or equipment

## Examples

Examples of hazing prohibited by this Guideline include, without limitation:

- (1) requiring, forcing, or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
- (2) tying, taping, or otherwise physically restraining an athlete
- (3) sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature
- (4) sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food
- (5) social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule
- (6) beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault
- (7) excessive training requirements focused on individuals on a team

## WILLFULLY TOLERATING MISCONDUCT

Failure to report forms of misconduct may result in a violation of State law.

## REPORTING

Although these guidelines are designed to reduce child sexual abuse and other misconduct, it can still occur. West Seattle Reign Sports LLC members (coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff), and participants of WSR shall follow the reporting procedures set forth in WSR's Athlete Protection Handbook. West Seattle Reign Sports LLC does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office.



*MANAGING TRAINING AND  
COMPETITION*

## COACHES EVALUATION

All registered non-athletes will take the WSR free offered Positive Coaching Alliance educational course as part of gaining membership into the WSR.

This Double-Goal Coach training program will give all team administrators, club directors, and coaches the tools they need to help youth athletes improve. PCA's online course is filled with powerful coaching tools that are based on the latest research in sports psychology and reflect the "best practices" of elite coaches and athletes, including such PCA National Advisory Board Members as Los Angeles Lakers Head Coach Phil Jackson, Boston Celtics Head Coach Doc Rivers, Naismith Hall of Fame basketball coaches Dean Smith and Larry Brown, former Kansas City Chiefs Head Coach Herm Edwards, Olympic Gold Medal Gymnast Bart Conner, Olympic Gold Medalist and former WNBA star Ruthie Bolton and Olympic Gold Medalist swimmer Summer Sanders, just to name a few. [www.aausports.org](http://www.aausports.org)

## SUPERVISION OF ATHLETES

During training and competition, West Seattle Reign Sports LLC strives to create two-deep leadership and minimize one-to-one interactions to create a safe training environment and to protect athletes and participants.

## ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS

### ***Appropriate one-on-one interactions with athletes***

#### Individual Meetings

An individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, training program, or competition schedule. Under these circumstances, coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff members are to observe the following guidelines:

- Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed
- Where possible, an individual meeting should take place in a publicly visible and open area, such as the corner of a gym or pool deck
- If an individual meeting is to take place in an office, the door should remain unlocked and open
- If a closed-door meeting is necessary, the coach, staff member and/or volunteer must have another person in attendance and ensure the door remains unlocked

#### Individual Training Sessions

An individual training session(s) with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. Under these circumstances, written permission of a minor athlete's parents or guardians is recommended in advance of the individual training session(s), and West Seattle Reign Sports LLC encourages parents and guardians to attend the training session.

Prohibited one-to-one interactions with athletes

Except as set forth above, minor athletes and participants should not be left unattended or unsupervised during WSR activities. Coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff members are prohibited from being alone with an individual athlete or participant in any room or building. Social activities and fundraising events shall not be conducted on a one-on-one basis. These activities should include the entire team.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH ATHLETES

Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, event organizers, volunteers, or staff members is a productive and inevitable part of sport. Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport participation through appropriate physical contact. However, guidelines for physical contact must be set to reduce the potential for misconduct in sport.

### Appropriate Physical Contact

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC adheres to the following guidelines regarding physical contact with our athletes:

#### Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact

Physical contact with athletes – for safety, consolation, and celebration – has multiple criteria in common which make them both safe and appropriate. These include:

- the physical contact must take place in public
- there is no potential for physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact
- the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult

### Safety

The safety of our athletes is paramount, and, in many instances, we make the athletic space safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:

- spotting an athlete so that they will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment
- positioning an athlete's body so that they more quickly acquire an athletic skill, get a better sense of where their body is in space, or improve their balance and coordination
- making athletes aware that they might be in harm's way because of other athletes practicing around them or because of equipment in use

### Celebration

Sports are physical by definition and we recognize participants often express their joy of participation, competition, achievement, and victory through physical acts. We encourage these public expressions of celebration, which include:

- greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs
- congratulatory gestures such as celebratory hugs, "jump arounds" and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment

### Consolation

It may be appropriate to console an emotionally distressed athlete (e.g., an athlete who has been injured or has just lost a competition). Appropriate consolation includes:

- publicly embracing a crying athlete
- putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them in an effort to calm them down (“side hugs”)
- lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface to encourage them to continue competition

### Prohibited Physical Contact

Prohibited forms of physical contact:

- asking or having an athlete sit in the lap of a coach, administrator, staff member or volunteer
- lingering or repeated embraces of athletes that go beyond the criteria set forth for physical contact
- slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish, or achieve compliance from an athlete
- “cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact during any aspect of training, travel, or overnight stay
- playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., tickling or “horseplay” wrestling)
- continued physical contact that makes an athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not
- any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

As part of WSR’s emphasis on athlete safety, all electronic communications between a coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.

**As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete’s family. If the athlete is under the age of 21, any email, electronic text, social media, or similar communication must copy or include the athlete’s parents or guardians.**

### Facebook, Myspace, Blogs and Similar Sites

Coaches may not have athletes join a personal social media page. Athlete members and parents can friend the official club/team page and staff can communicate to athlete members through the site. All posts, messages, text, or media of any kind between any WSR staff and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.

#### Twitter, Instant Messaging and Similar Media

Coaches and athletes may “follow” each other. Coaches cannot “re-tweet” athlete message posts. All posts between coach and athlete must be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.

#### Email and Similar Electronic Communications

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate. All email content between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Where the coach is a staff member and/or volunteer, email from a coach to any athlete should come from the TeamSnap App.

#### Texting and Similar Electronic Communications

Texting is allowed between coaches and athletes. All texts between coach and athlete must be professional and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.

#### Electronic Imagery

From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the athlete – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be submitted to local, state, or national publications, used in club videos, posted on club or club associated websites and Social Media, or offered to the club families seasonally on disc or other electronic form. It is the default guideline of West Seattle Reign Sports LLC to allow such practices as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and the club.

#### Request To Discontinue All Electronic Communications Or Imagery

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by any form of electronic communication by coaches (photography or videography).

#### Misconduct

Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by coaches, volunteers, administrators, officials, staff, parents, or athletes are not acceptable and are considered violations of our Athlete Protection Handbook.

#### LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC is concerned with locker room activities between minors, minors and adults, adults being alone with individual minors in locker rooms and changing areas, with nonofficial or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants, and with inappropriate behavior among adults in locker rooms.

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

## Facilities

The following is a description of our practice and competition facilities to allow athletes and their families to plan their use:

We practice at: Alki Beach Volleyball Courts (2400 Alki Ave, Seattle, WA 98116)

This location has: No locker room or changing facilities. Athletes will be expected to come dressed for practice and to change and shower at home. There is a City provided restroom available approx. 1 block away from the courts; due to participant numbers there will not be staff available to accompany athletes to the restroom.

When we travel for competition the facilities may differ from location to location. We will work with the host team to provide as much information about the locker room and changing areas as early as possible and post that information as soon as it is available.

As part of WSR's commitment to safety, West Seattle Reign Sports LLC recommends its clubs to publish practices for locker rooms and changing areas.

### Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Guidelines

- **Supervision/Monitoring** CLUB has staggered practices, with different groups arriving and departing throughout the day. It is therefore not practical to constantly monitor locker rooms and changing areas over this extended course of time. While we do not post staff members inside or at the doors of the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. Staff members conduct these sweeps, with women checking on female-designated areas, and men checking on male-designated areas.
  - Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete's whereabouts.
  - Given the potential discomfort of having non-coaches and non-athletes in the locker rooms and changing areas, we discourage parents from entering those areas unless it is truly necessary. Under such circumstances, only a same-sex parent should go into a locker room and changing area.
  - If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach, or an administrator know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.
- **Mixed Gender Teams** If the team consists of both male and female athletes, both female and male privacy rights must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, CLUB has the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single dressing room before the game or team meeting. Once the game is finished, the players may come to one locker room and then the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower (separately), if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the athletes will take turns using the locker room to change.

- **Prohibited Conduct.** CLUB's guidelines must prohibit hazing, bullying, harassment, and other forms of misconduct, as set forth in West Seattle Reign Sports LLC's Athlete Protection Handbook
- **User of Recording Devices** WSR's guidelines prohibit the use of a device's recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras. Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. As a result, **THERE WILL BE NO USE OF A DEVICE'S RECORDING CAPABILITIES IN RESTROOMS, LOCKER ROOMS OR CHANGING AREAS.**
- **Meetings.** For individual meetings with a minor participant and a coach in a locker room, WSR requires that at least one additional responsible adult be with the coach.

## TRAVEL

As part of WSR's commitment to athlete safety, West Seattle Reign Sports LLC has published standard practices for team travel. Travel will be a standard aspect of our competitive season and CLUB has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

### Local and Team Travel

We distinguish between travel to training, practice, and local competition ("local travel"), and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay ("team travel").

#### Local Travel

Local travel occurs when WSR does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, athletes, or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances, it is the responsibility of the athlete or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) to ensure the person transporting the athlete maintains all safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws.

In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, WSR staff members, coaches and/or volunteers, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated athlete and should only drive with at least two other athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the athlete's parent or guardian in advance of travel. In any case where a staff member and/or volunteer is involved in the athlete's local travel, a parental release is required in advance. Efforts must be made to ensure that staff and/or volunteers are not alone with an athlete or participant, by, e.g., picking the athletes up in groups.

Coaches, staff members and volunteers who are also an athlete's guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. We also recommend completing a shared travel declaration form signed by the parents/guardians of any minor athlete who is being transported as part of such a carpool arrangement.

## **Team Travel**

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when WSR sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our teams can compete locally, regionally, or nationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the athletes. However, no coach, staff member, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including valid drivers' licenses, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicles, and compliance with all state laws. Drivers of vehicle should be age 21 or older.

WSR makes efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones.

For team travel, hotels and air travel will be booked in advance by WSR. Athletes will share rooms, with 2-4 athletes assigned per room depending on accommodations. WSR will also notify hotel management should any special arrangements be warranted. For instance, we will ask hotels to block pay per view channels and we will request an additional large room or suite so that our members and athletes may socialize as a group. Meetings do not occur in hotel rooms, and we will reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.

We encourage family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the team hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly and allow for any unscheduled calls by either the athlete or parent/guardian.

- Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches, and other adults traveling with the club.
- Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete(s) (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete).
- When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his or her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach.

## Travel Notification

When possible, WSR will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Notice will include the dates, location, and duration of competition. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within the club/team. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.

WSR will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed, hour-by-hour itinerary as well as contact information for team travel chaperones.

## Mixed-Gender and Mixed-Age Travel

WSR is made up of male and female athletes across various ages. Athletes will only share a room with other athletes of the same sex and age group. Athletes will also be grouped by age and sex for the purposes of assigning an appropriate chaperone. We will make every effort to provide these groups at

least one chaperone of the same sex. However, we rely on parents who volunteer to serve as chaperones and may be limited in providing this match.

Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete).

#### Coach and Staff Responsibilities

During team travel, coaches and staff members will help athletes, fellow coaches and staff members adhere to these guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Guidelines, Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Guidelines and Reporting Guidelines.

If a coach or staff member transports an athlete or other organization member in their private car for team travel, a copy of the coach's or staff member's valid driver's license is required.

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, coaches and staff will monitor the activities of athletes, fellow coaches, and staff during team travel. Coaches and staff will:

1. Prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14
2. Familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel
3. Conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the WSR Athlete Protection Handbook, and all guidelines during team travel
4. Encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians
5. Help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible)
6. Assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible)
7. Support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary
8. Ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements
9. Make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff, and chaperones
10. Not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching duties
11. Immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or guideline violations
12. Notify parents before taking any disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents.

#### Chaperone Responsibilities

Chaperones accompany team travel to ensure that the athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers adhere to the WSR's guidelines. While these include the travel guidelines, it also includes all other relevant policies contained in WSR's Athlete Protection Handbook.

If a chaperone has not undergone a criminal background check, the chaperone will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with athletes or other youth participants.

If a chaperone has undergone a criminal background check, he or she may have appropriate one-on-one interactions as outlined in the WSR's Athlete Protection Handbook. If a chaperone will be operating a private car for team travel, a copy of the chaperone's valid driver's license is required.

Chaperones will monitor the activities of all coaches, staff members, volunteers, and athletes during team travel. Specifically, chaperones will:

1. Familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before team travel
2. Monitor for adherences to club guidelines during team travel
3. Encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians
4. Help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible)
5. Assist coaches, staff and other volunteers with team travel logistical needs (as possible)
6. Monitor athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary
7. Ensure athletes comply with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements
8. Not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their chaperone duties
9. Make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff, and chaperones
10. Immediately report any concerns about sexual and physical abuse, misconduct, or guideline violations to local law enforcement.



*RESPONDING TO ABUSE, MISCONDUCT  
AND GUIDELINE VIOLATIONS*

## REPORTING GUIDELINES

Any report of misconduct or suspicions of child physical or sexual abuse will be taken seriously and handled appropriately. Every WSR member (coach, event organizer, volunteer, and staff) must report suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to both (a) **the appropriate law enforcement authorities** and to (b) the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office.

**West Seattle Reign Sports LLC does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

### Reporting Procedure

#### To Whom to Report

Reports must be made to local law enforcement and the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office Compliance Department.

#### How to Report

West Seattle Reign Sports LLC will take a report in a verbal or written form. Regardless of how you choose to report, it is helpful to WSR for individuals to provide, at a minimum, (1) the name and contact information of the person making the report; (2) the type of misconduct alleged, and the name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct; (3) date of the incident; (4) name of the alleged victim.

#### Confidentiality

To the extent permitted by law, and as appropriate, West Seattle Reign Sports LLC will keep confidential the complainant's name on request, not make public the names of potential victims, the accused perpetrator or the people who made a report of child physical and sexual abuse to the authorities.

#### How Reports Are Handled

##### Suspicions or Allegations of Child Physical or Sexual Abuse

##### Reporting to Law Enforcement and/or Child Protective Services

An independent investigation can harm youth and/or interfere with the legal investigative process. West Seattle Reign Sports LLC, its staff members and/or volunteers **do not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities.** As necessary, however, WSR may ask a few clarifying questions of the minor or person making the report to adequately report the suspicion or allegation to law enforcement authorities.

##### Immediate Notification

When an allegation of child physical or sexual abuse is made against a staff member, youth and/or volunteer, West Seattle Reign Sports LLC may immediately notify the member that he or she is ineligible to participate in any WSR activities. As necessary, WSR may suspend or change the assignment of a staff member and/or volunteer.

All WSR members (coaches, event organizers, volunteers, and staff) are mandatory reporters. Failure to report to local law enforcement and the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Office will subject the individual(s) to disciplinary procedures under the WSR Code.

#### Violations

Upon receiving notification of a violation of the misconduct provisions of the West Seattle Reign Sports LLC Athlete Protection Handbook, the Department of Compliance may refer the matter to the attention of the Chair of the National Board of Review of the National Governing Body (AAU, JVA &/OR USAVB).

The Chair may:

1. When there is uncontroverted evidence of a violation, or pending charges, void or block the offender's membership.
2. Initiate a National Board of Review inquiry or complaint.



## APPENDIX: *DEFINITIONS*

## DEFINITIONS

### Child, children, minor and youth

Anyone under the age of 21. Here, “child,” “children,” “minor” and “youth” are used interchangeably.

### Child physical abuse

- Non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by contact behaviors, such as punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child. Child physical abuse may also include non-contact physical misconduct as described in the Athlete Protection Handbook.
- Legal definitions vary by state. To find guidelines concerning your state, visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway ([www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)).

### Child sexual abuse

- Child sexual abuse involves any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a minor that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force, or threat of force regardless of whether there is deception, or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Sexual contact between minors can also be abusive if there is a significant imbalance of power or disparity in age, development, or size, such that one child is the aggressor. The sexually abusive acts may include sexual penetration, sexual touching, or non-contact sexual acts such as verbal acts, sexually suggestive written or electronic communications, exposure, or voyeurism.
- Legal definitions vary by state. To find guidelines concerning your state, visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway ([www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)).

### Misconduct

Conduct which results in harm, the potential for harm or the imminent threat of harm. Age is irrelevant to misconduct. There are six primary types of misconduct in sport: emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment, and hazing.

### Participants

Participants are those who participate in a sport activity through a particular club or organization. Participants may include athletes, coaches, officials, or referees. Participants include (or may be) minors.