

# UNITED SOCCER LEAGUES ANTI-FRATERNIZATION POLICY

## I. Policy Purpose

This Anti-Fraternization Policy (this “**Policy**”) is applicable to the USL Championship, USL League One, and Super League (collectively, “**USL**” or the “**League**”), each of their member clubs (each, a “**Club**”), and each of their respective owners, officers, directors, agents, employees or any and all other Persons engaged or appointed by them or having actual or apparent authority to act on their behalf, which, in the case of a Club, specifically includes its coaches and players (each a “**Covered Person**” and, collectively, “**Covered Personnel**”).

The principles set out in this Policy are intended to apply to any work-related context. Work-related contexts include, but are not limited to, matches, training, conferences, work functions, social events, meetings, and business trips without regard to whether the location is a League Facility, Club Facility, or offsite.

This Anti-Fraternization policy supports the mission of the USL and its Clubs within their Ecosystem by establishing an environment free from bias, conflict, or inequitable treatment. Additionally, this policy serves to uphold the USL high standards of professional and ethical conduct, specifically with respect to interpersonal relationships within its Ecosystem.

## II. Players Covered Under a Collective Bargaining Agreement

This Policy is intended to work in conjunction with, and not to replace, amend, or modify any terms or conditions of employment stated in any collective bargaining agreement. Wherever terms of this Policy differ from the terms expressed in the applicable collective bargaining agreement, Covered Personnel should refer to the specific terms of the collective bargaining agreement, which will control.

## III. Policy Statement

### A. Fraternalization between any covered persons in the position of authority and a subordinate

In cases where a consensual romantic or sexual relationship exists between individuals in inherently unequal positions of authority, such relationships could have the effect of impeding the success of the work environment. Moreover, because of the real or perceived power imbalance that may exist, such a relationship may also raise questions about the mutuality of consent. Such situations may cast doubt on the objectivity and fairness of the workplace, damage workplace morale, and place the USL and/or its Clubs within their Ecosystem in a legally vulnerable position.

1. A romantic or sexual relationship between a supervisor and their employee is expressly prohibited. Romantic or sexual relationships are also prohibited between employees and interns and/or volunteers in any capacity.

2. No Supervisor shall have or pursue a “**Consensual Relationship**” with an employee where the Supervisor has a position of authority or responsibility to hire, promote, discipline, evaluate, assign, or direct the employee. If such a relationship develops, the person in the position of greater authority must disclose the relationship by completing a Conflict of Interest and Commitment (COIC) disclosure form. Human Resources, in partnership with management, will evaluate the situation and ensure that alternate supervisory or evaluative arrangements are in place to address any conflict of interest including the creation of a Management Plan.

3. A Supervisor will be subject to disciplinary action for failing to promptly disclose a romantic or sexual relationship with an employee.

4. Prompt disclosure is an effective method of adhering to this policy but does not alone ensure that the policy has not been violated. Policy violations will be determined on a case-by-case basis after considering the facts of each relationship.

5. In addition, all members of the USL and its Clubs within their Ecosystem must disclose a new or existing Consensual Relationship by completing a Conflict of Interest and Commitment (COIC) disclosure form. Human Resources will provide this form upon request.

#### **A. Fraternalization between covered persons without positions of authority**

1. The USL and its Clubs within their Ecosystem prohibit *non-consensual* relationships to ensure its employees can work in an environment where they can be objectively supervised, instructed, or evaluated. Moreover, to provide equal treatment and avoid potential conflicts of interest, favoritism, exploitation, harassment, or professional standard breaches, Employees for the USL and its Clubs within their Ecosystem are prohibited from engaging in romantic or sexual relationships where supervision, position of authority, direction or control exists between the parties.

### **IV. Responsibilities**

All individuals to whom this policy applies are responsible for becoming familiar with and following this policy. Supervisors within the USL Ecosystem are responsible for promoting the understanding of this policy and for taking appropriate steps to help ensure compliance with it. All members within the USL Ecosystem will be required to participate in annual training on this policy. Members joining after the annual training will be required to take the training as part of the new employee onboarding process.

**A. Supervisors:** Romantic or sexual relationships with subordinates or any person who has authority over another are prohibited. However, should such a relationship arise, it must be disclosed by the Supervisor or senior member so that a Management Plan can be instituted, if appropriate.

- B. Management Plan:** When a Management Plan is required in accordance with the Conflict of Interest and Commitment Process, a supervisor must submit a plan to the Conflict of Interest and Commitment Review Committee for review and approval.
- C. Human Resources:** Serve as primary resource to inform individuals in a Consensual Relationship of an approved plan to eliminate or mitigate risks to the USL and their Clubs within their Ecosystem because of the relationship.

## **V. Consequences for Violating this Policy**

Failure to comply with this and related policies is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension without pay, or termination of employment or association with the United Soccer League and/or their Clubs within their Ecosystem, in accordance with applicable disciplinary procedures.

## **VI. Related Information**

This policy is not a legal document. This policy does not confer a term of employment, nor is the language intended to establish a contract of employment, express or implied, between any employee of the USL or its Clubs within their Ecosystem. The USL and the Clubs within their Ecosystem reserves the right to change, amend or terminate any of its human resources policies at any time for any reason.

## APPENDIX 1

### DEFINITIONS

1. “**Club**” has the meaning set forth in the Preamble.
2. “**Consensual Relationship**” A Consensual Relationship is one in which two people are engaged by mutual consent in an emotionally (romantic) or physically (sexually) intimate relationship. Eighteen (18) years old is the legal age of consent. This means that a minor, who is under 18 years old, cannot legally consent to sex.
3. “**Covered Person**” has the meaning set forth in the Preamble.
4. “**Covered Personnel**” has the meaning set forth in the Preamble.
5. “**League**” has the meaning set forth in the Preamble.
6. “**Management Plan**” A document that outlines the management and/or operational mechanisms and processes put in place to address conflict.
7. “**Player**” means a player who participates in a Club.
6. “**Policy**” has the meaning set forth in the Preamble.
8. “**Supervisor**” Any person who has the authority and/or responsibility to hire, promote, discipline, evaluate, assign, or direct employees within the United Soccer League or a USL affiliated Club.
9. “**USL**” has the meaning set forth in the preamble.