



## **WALNUT CREEK SOCCER SURF CLUB PLAYER BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY**

### **Purpose of Policy**

The Walnut Creek Surf Soccer Club (“WCSSC” or “Club”) believes that players should be provided the opportunity to experience athletics in an environment that is fun, healthy, and where players are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness. Bullying denies an athlete that opportunity by negatively impacting an athlete’s performance, level of enjoyment, and physical and mental health. Accordingly, this Player Bullying Prevention Policy (“Policy”) aims to prevent bullying of players in our sports community.

### **Scope**

This Policy is intended to protect players from bullying by other players, parents, coaches, team managers, employees, and volunteers of the Club. It prohibits bullying at practices, trainings, academies, tournaments, and any other related Club activities. It also applies to conduct outside of formal Club activities, such as online or social media interactions, if that conduct impacts the Club and its players.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

This Policy prohibits bullying of players by other players, parents, coaches, team managers, employees, and volunteers of the Club. Bullying is any conduct (including but not limited to online behavior such as emailing, social media posting, direct messaging, and text messaging) directed toward one or more players that is reasonably likely to:

- a. Place a player in reasonable fear of harm to their person or property;
- b. Have a substantially detrimental effect on a reasonable player’s physical or mental health;
- c. Substantially interfere with a reasonable player’s athletic performance with the Club; or
- d. Substantially interfere with a reasonable player’s ability to participate in or benefit from the activities provided by WCSSC.



Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Social exclusion;
- b. Threats and intimidation;
- c. Stalking;
- d. Direct physical contact beyond the scope of what is reasonable in a sports context, such as punching, pinching, slapping, pulling hair, or tripping;
- e. Theft;
- f. Repeated, aggressive, and intentional public humiliation;
- g. Destruction of property;
- h. Repeated verbal or written insults, teasing, or name-calling;
- i. Creating a false profile on a social networking website to have one or more of the effects listed above

In the sports context, there are times when coaches will need to provide constructive criticism and firm directions to players, which is not bullying. For example, yelling that is reasonable within the sports context, such as coaches providing directions on a drill from the sidelines during practice, is not bullying. Officials making rulings or providing directions to players and the Club taking disciplinary action, is also not bullying.

A player, parent, coach, or other Club community member who engages in bullying conduct towards another player, may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal of themselves or their family from the Club or termination of their employment. If a parent, coach, or other adult community member of the Club sees players engaging in bullying conduct, they must take action to stop the behavior, if appropriate under the circumstances, and in all cases, they must report the incident to the General Manager (or if the General Manager is involved in the incident, to the Board Chair).



## **Reporting**

Players are encouraged to immediately report any bullying incidents they experience or believe may be happening to other players to any coach, any team manager, the Director of Coaching, or the General Manager. Club employees must report any concerns about bullying they receive from a player to the General Manager. If the complaint is about alleged misconduct by the General Manager, the complaint should be brought to the attention of the Club's Board Chair.

## **Investigation and Response**

After the Club receives a complaint about bullying or otherwise learns of an alleged potential violation of this Policy, it may request clarification or conduct an initial inquiry to determine whether the alleged conduct at issue is a possible violation of this Policy. To request clarification or conduct an initial inquiry, the Club may meet with the persons who made the report or who are reported to have been subjected to bullying conduct or conduct other action the Club determines is appropriate under the circumstances. After doing so, the Club will determine the proper course of action, which may include an investigation. If the Club initiates an investigation, it will investigate as it deems appropriate, at its sole discretion.

During any investigation, the Club may provide appropriate interim support and reasonable protective measures if, based on the circumstance, the Club determines such measures are needed. The Club will determine the necessity and scope of such measures. The Club will also make a reasonable effort to protect privacy and confidentiality but cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. For example, information will need to be shared with Club staff involved in an investigation or as necessary to conduct an investigation, implement any interim measures, and take effective corrective action.

## **Remedial and Disciplinary Action**

Any student, parent, coach, or other member of the WCSSC community determined by WCSSC, in its sole discretion, to have violated this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from any further WCSSC activities, removal of themselves or their family members from the Club, or termination of their employment or other relationship with WCSSC.