



Anti-Retaliation Policy for Northwest United FC

Purpose:

Northwest United FC (“the club”) is committed to fostering an environment of integrity, respect, and safety for all participants, including players, coaches, staff, volunteers, and parents. The club recognizes the importance of reporting misconduct, such as bullying, hazing, racism, or harassment, unsatisfactory behavior or performance, or any violation of club policies. To encourage open communication and reporting, this policy strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports unacceptable behaviors or participates in an investigation.

Scope:

This policy applies to all individuals involved with Northwest United FC including players, coaches, staff, volunteers, parents, and spectators. It covers any club-related activities, events, practices, games, and tournaments, including online and digital communications.

Definition of Retaliation:

1. Retaliation is any adverse action taken against an individual because they:
 - a. Reported misconduct, inappropriate behavior, unsatisfactory performance of duties, or a violation of club policy
 - b. Participated in an investigation of misconduct
 - c. Supported or assisted another person in making a report
2. Adverse actions can include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Intimidation or threats
 - b. Verbal abuse or harassment
 - c. Social exclusion or ostracism
3. Negative treatment or unfair coaching decisions
4. Removal from team activities or reduction in playing time without legitimate cause
5. Any other conduct that could reasonably deter a person from reporting future concerns

Policy Guidelines:

1. **Zero Tolerance for Retaliation** - The club strictly prohibits retaliation in any form. Retaliation undermines the integrity of the club’s values and its commitment to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment. Any act of retaliation will result in disciplinary action.
2. **Protected Activities** - Individuals are protected from retaliation when they:
 - a. Report a violation of club policies, such as bullying, hazing, harassment, racism, unsatisfactory performance of duties, or any other inappropriate behavior/conduct
 - b. Participate in investigations as witnesses or provide evidence
 - c. Support or assist others in reporting or raising concerns
 - d. Raise questions or seek advice about potential violations or inappropriate behavior
3. **Reporting Retaliation** - Any individual who believes they are experiencing retaliation or have witnessed retaliatory actions should report the incident immediately to a coach, club official, or

the designated club representative. The club will take all reports seriously and ensure that retaliation is addressed promptly.

4. **Confidentiality** - All reports of retaliation will be handled with discretion and confidentiality to the extent possible. The club will take steps to protect the privacy of individuals involved, though it may be necessary to share some information to effectively investigate and address the situation.
5. **Investigation** - The club will promptly investigate any reported retaliation. This investigation will include interviews with all relevant parties and a review of any evidence provided. The club will ensure that the investigation process is fair, thorough, and unbiased.
6. **Consequences for Retaliation** - Individuals found to have engaged in retaliation will face appropriate disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to:
 - a. Verbal or written warnings
 - b. Suspension from practices, games, or other club activities
 - c. Removal from roles within the club
 - d. Permanent expulsion from the club, depending on the severity of the retaliation
 - e. In cases involving legal or criminal misconduct, notification of law enforcement
7. **False Reports** - While the club encourages open reporting, knowingly making false claims of retaliation or misconduct is a serious violation of this policy. Individuals who intentionally submit false reports may also face disciplinary action.
8. **Support and Protection** - The club is committed to supporting individuals who report concerns or participate in investigations. Any individual who reports retaliation or misconduct in good faith will be protected from adverse consequences related to their participation. The club may also connect any individual who has experienced retaliation to support resources.

Conclusion:

Northwest United FC values integrity, fairness, and open communication. By strictly enforcing this Anti-Retaliation Policy, we ensure that individuals feel safe to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. Our goal is to maintain a positive and respectful atmosphere where all members can thrive.

Reviewed and Approved by: Northwest United FC Executive Committee

Effective Date: September 2024

Contact Information for Reporting: info@nwunited.org or Reporting Form at www.nwunited.org