



Anti-Bullying, Hazing, Racism, and Harassment Policy for Northwest United FC

Purpose:

Northwest United FC (“the club”) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all players, coaches, staff, volunteers, spectators, match officials, and league or tournament officials. This policy is designed to promote respect, diversity, and positive behavior, while prohibiting all forms of bullying, hazing, racism, and harassment. Any actions that undermine the integrity of our club or cause harm to others will not be tolerated.

Scope:

This policy applies to all participants in Northwest United FC including but not limited to players, coaches, staff, volunteers, parents, and spectators. It covers activities at all club-sponsored events, practices, games, and any interactions related to the club, including online or digital communications.

Definitions:

1. **Bullying** - Any repeated, intentional, and harmful behavior that targets an individual or group, causing physical, emotional, or psychological harm. Bullying can include but is not limited to:
 - a. Verbal abuse (name-calling, threats)
 - b. Physical intimidation or violence
 - c. Social exclusion
 - d. Spreading rumors or false information
 - e. Cyberbullying (using digital platforms to harm others)
2. **Hazing** - Any initiation or act that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate. Hazing may involve physical harm, forced consumption of substances, or any activity that puts individuals in dangerous or embarrassing situations.
3. **Racism** - Discriminatory behavior, whether verbal, physical, or symbolic, that targets individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, nationality, or skin color. This includes racial slurs, stereotypes, exclusion based on race, or any act of hate speech.
4. **Harassment** - Unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical, based on a person’s gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. Harassment can take the form of offensive jokes, slurs, threats, intimidation, or inappropriate physical contact.

Policy Guidelines:

1. **Respect for All** - All members of the Northwest United FC are expected to treat one another with respect and dignity, regardless of differences in background, skill level, race, gender, or other characteristics. Bullying, hazing, racism, and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

2. **Zero Tolerance** - Any behavior that constitutes bullying, hazing, racism, or harassment will be subject to immediate disciplinary action. This includes:
 - a. Verbal or written warnings
 - b. Suspension from team activities
 - c. Removal from roles within the club
 - d. Permanent removal from the club, depending on the severity of the incident
 - e. In cases involving legal or criminal misconduct, notification of law enforcement

3. **Reporting Procedure** - Any individual who experiences or witnesses bullying, hazing, racism, or harassment should report the incident immediately to a coach, club official, or designated club representative, or if during a match or tournament, to the match or tournament official(s). All reports will be taken seriously, and confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible. Anonymous reports will be accepted, though may be more difficult to investigate.

4. **Investigation** - The club will promptly investigate all reported incidents. This investigation will involve interviews with all parties involved, including witnesses, and a review of relevant evidence (if applicable). The club will work to ensure a fair process for all involved.

5. **Consequences** - Based on the investigation, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Consequences for violating this policy may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Verbal or written apologies
 - b. Mandatory training or counseling
 - c. Temporary or permanent suspension from club activities
 - d. Notification to authorities or law enforcement, where required

6. **Support Services** - Victims of bullying, hazing, racism, or harassment should work with support resources, such as counseling or guidance as they are able to. The club will assist in connecting individuals to support services if needed.

7. **Prevention and Education** - The club will engage in regular education and awareness programs to prevent bullying, hazing, racism, and harassment. Coaches, staff, and volunteers will receive training on identifying, preventing, and addressing inappropriate behavior. The club may also implement education and awareness programs for players and parents when appropriate.

Conclusion:

Northwest United FC is dedicated to ensuring a positive and safe environment for everyone. By enforcing this policy, we aim to foster a culture of respect, teamwork, and inclusion. Together, we can create a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for all players to thrive both on and off the field.

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

