



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

Contents

1. Preamble
2. Definitions
3. Prohibited Conduct
4. Appropriate Conduct
5. Disclosures for Membership
6. Fitness Criteria for Membership
7. Criminal Background Checks for Coach Certification
8. Reporting Procedures
9. Appeal Procedures

Addendum – Guidelines for Chapters and Local Organizations

SECTION ONE – PREAMBLE

Lacrosse is America's oldest sport, founded by Native Americans centuries ago long before the United States was established. It is also one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, with youth, high school, collegiate and adult programs developing exponentially across the nation. US Lacrosse was established in 1998 to ensure a unified and responsive organization which develops and promotes the sport by providing services to its members and programs to inspire participation, while preserving the integrity of the game. US Lacrosse believes there are many reasons to play sports, including athletes enjoying a wide range of physical, emotional and social benefits. Participation in organized sports also improves motor skills, promotes strategic thinking, and enhances interpersonal skills. US Lacrosse would like to acknowledge the US Olympic Committee for their willingness to share resources which were used to develop this Standard.

Unfortunately, sports can also be an environment for misconduct, including child physical and sexual abuse. Such conduct is intolerable, and is considered harmful to the psychological and physical health of athletes of all ages and genders. While almost all participants in our sport have the utmost integrity, some may use sports as a means for perpetuating abuse.

It is the intent of this Standard to clearly state and to allow US Lacrosse to demonstrate its commitment to the safety and well-being of athletes that are minors. There will be no tolerance for verbal, psychological, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse of children in the sport of



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

lacrosse. Any suspicion will be reported to state and local child protective services and law enforcement agencies. These suspicions could also lead to a loss of membership, if substantiated. Specific acceptable or prescribed conducts must be followed by all adult members when interacting with minor athletes. Not following these required behaviors can also lead to a loss of membership privilege.

Additionally, each adult member of US Lacrosse will be required to affirm that they have not committed any related criminal offenses upon membership application and renewal. Adults, including coaches and volunteers will be expected to follow the prescribed conduct described for their protection and for the protection of the minors with whom they work. Certified coaches will also be required to submit to a criminal background screening every other year to become and remain certified. Members that cannot comply with these terms will not be granted membership in US Lacrosse.

SECTION TWO – DEFINITIONS

- (A) “Misconduct” is behavior which results in harm, the potential for harm or the imminent threat of harm. Age is irrelevant to misconduct. It may involve verbal, psychological, physical, or sexual abuse misconduct, including bullying, harassment and hazing.
- (B) “Physical misconduct” is contact or non-contact behavior that results in, have the potential to, or threaten to cause physical harm to an athlete or other sports participants. It may also include any other act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state laws. However, “physical misconduct” does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods such as skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, making contact to simulate game contact is an appropriate form of contact, but not overpowering force, such as would be penalized in a game.
- (C) “Emotional Misconduct” involves a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behavior includes verbal and physical acts, as well as actions that deny attention or support. It also includes any act or conduct (e.g., child abuse and child neglect) described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law. The wide range of emotions athletes experience in practice and competition is a normal and healthy component of sport. However, a coach’s or athlete’s repeated pattern of behavior that can inflict psychological or emotional harm has no place in sport. By gaining a complete understanding of the conduct that qualify as emotional misconduct, participants can be in a stronger position to take action.
- (D) “Participants” are those who engage in the sport activity of lacrosse through a particular club, team, school or organization. They include athletes, coaches and officials, as well as volunteers who regularly participate with a particular club, team, school or organization. Participants include minors or adults.
- (E) “Child,” “Minor” or “Youth” refers to anyone under 18 years of age.



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

- (F) “Physical abuse” is non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by contact behaviors, such as punching, hitting, striking, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a participant. Child physical abuse may include any physical misconduct that a minor does not have the capacity to which to consent.
- (G) “Sexual misconduct” includes sexual assault, sexual harassment and sexual abuse or any other sexual intimacies that exploit an athlete.
- (H) “Child sexual abuse” involves any sexual activity with a child, minor or youth where consent is not and cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a minor that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of any deception or whether the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Sexual contact between minors can also be abusive if there is 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. Minors cannot legally consent to sexual activity with an adult, and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

SECTION THREE – PROHIBITED CONDUCT

The paramount principal for US Lacrosse and its members is that any and all forms of physical and sexual abuse and/or misconduct are strictly prohibited. US Lacrosse requires the highest standard of integrity for its members to ensure that abuse and misconduct do not occur at any level. No member of US Lacrosse may engage in behaviors that are considered child sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, physical abuse, or physical misconduct.

Any suspicion will be reported to state and local child protective services and law enforcement agencies. At a minimum, members engaged in prohibited conduct will be subject to loss of membership in US Lacrosse.





Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

SECTION FOUR – APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

US Lacrosse expects its members to create a safe environment to protect athletes, coaches, and participants. Part of that safe environment is one that is free from potentially harassing and inappropriate behavior from adults toward minors. The following behavior guidelines describe how members are expected to act, at a minimum. Members not using appropriate conduct will be subject to loss of membership in US Lacrosse.

- (A) One-to-One Interactions. There may be situations that are appropriate one-on-one interactions with athletes or participants. For example, an individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, goals, or academic performance. However, these situations should be avoided to the extent possible for the protection of both persons and should occur within the sight of another adult.
- (B) Individual Training Sessions. An individual training session with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. However, written permission of a minor athlete's parents or guardians is required in advance of the individual training session(s) and parents or guardians are encouraged to attend.
- (C) Prohibited one-to-one interactions with athletes or participants. Except for the exceptions above, minor athletes and participants will not be left unattended or unsupervised during team activities. Team coaches, staff members and/or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual athlete or participant both indoors and out.
- (D) Physical Contact with Athletes. Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, staff members, contractors or volunteers 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. US Lacrosse adheres to the following principles and guidelines in regards to physical contact with our athletes:
 - (a) 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 are that physical contact takes place in public, there is no potential for sexual intimacies during the physical contact, and the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult.
 - (b) Safety During Appropriate Physical Contact. The safety of our athletes is paramount and in many instances we make the athletic space safer through appropriate public physical contact. Examples include: 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



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

practicing around them or because of equipment in use, or for injury evaluation or treatment by a coach, athletic trainer, or other qualified medical personnel.

- (E) Celebration. Sports are physical by definition and we recognize participants often express their joy of participation, competition, achievement and victory through physical acts. These public expressions of celebration are encouraged, which include: greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs and congratulatory gestures—such as celebratory hugs, “jump arounds” and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment.
- (F) 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”), or lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface and “dusting them off” to encourage them to continue competition.
- (G) Electronic Communications & Social Media. With an emphasis on athlete safety, all electronic communications between a coach and youth athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. As with all communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete’s family. Any electronic communication with a minor such as email, electronic text, social media or similar communication should copy or include the athlete’s parents or guardians.

SECTION FIVE – DISCLOSURES FOR MEMBERSHIP

Adult membership applicants in the Coach and Official category, and those who volunteer with minors, shall truthfully and fully disclose any and all information in their US Lacrosse application or renewal form regarding convictions, arrests or pending investigations, if any, that may exist for those criterion offenses as using the criteria for fitness and guidelines established by the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS).

Failure to make a full, candid, and truthful disclosure may serve as a basis for termination or suspension of membership. Where an individual has been found to be ineligible or unqualified for US Lacrosse membership or coach certification, such individual will be disqualified from membership. In the event of inconclusive information or disposition of a criterion offense, or a pending review by US Lacrosse, an active membership or active coach certification may be suspended until the issue is resolved.

During initial application and annual membership renewal, agreement with the Standard for Athlete Protection and Safety, along with a disclosure of convictions, arrests or pending investigations, if any, that may exist for those criterion offenses as defined above shall be required. Non-agreement or disclosure shall be grounds for termination or suspension of membership.



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection (Effective: June 15, 2013)

SECTION SIX – FITNESS CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

To implement its policies for athlete safety, US Lacrosse may make inquiry or background screening using the criteria for fitness and guidelines established by the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS). These include the conduct, character, and fitness of all US Lacrosse members and applicants over 18 years of age. Certified coaches and applicants for coach certification will be subject to background screening using the criteria for fitness and guidelines established by the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS). In addition, any other conduct not resulting in conviction or arrest that reasonably indicates that an individual is or may pose a risk to the safety, welfare, and protection of other members of US Lacrosse may be considered. The determination of whether an individual is or may pose such a risk and thus have membership revoked or denied shall be made at the sole discretion of the US Lacrosse.

SECTION SEVEN – REQUIRED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

All applicants for coach certification, specified national volunteers, and national team members with US Lacrosse must submit to a confidential criminal background check, to be conducted for US Lacrosse by the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI). Existing certified coaches shall submit to a renewal criminal background check once every two (2) years. The same criteria apply to members who submit to a NCSI background check through US Lacrosse for any reason.

(A) After completion of the criminal background check, NCSI will provide one of two possible determinations:

(1) GREEN LIGHT– “*meets* the criteria,” utilized where applicant has no record or has an arrest/conviction for a non-criterion offense,

(2) RED LIGHT– “*does not meet* the criteria,” utilized where applicant has a conviction of a criterion offense and,

(C) When disclosed following a criminal background check that an applicant for coach certification or an existing certified coach upon renewal has been given a “red light,” the applicant shall be deemed unqualified or ineligible for certification and membership, while an existing certified coach shall be disqualified from certification and membership.

(D) The only result that will be provided by NCSI to US Lacrosse is whether the applicant or certified coach has a green light or a red light.

(E) If the results of the criminal background check is erroneous, or otherwise flawed, the applicant or certified coach can pursue an appeal directly to NCSI through its review procedures. In most circumstances, an appeal directly to NCSI would be the first step in the review process. The final appeal would be through the US Lacrosse Council of Counselors following their written procedures.



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

SECTION EIGHT – REPORTING PROCEDURES

Sexual or physical abuse of children must be reported and although these policies are designed to reduce such abuse, it can still occur. Staff members, volunteers, and members of US Lacrosse must report suspicions or allegations of sexual or physical abuse of youth athletes to local or state law enforcement and child protective services. US Lacrosse does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child verbal, psychological, emotional, 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. To assist in understanding where to report in a specific location, check www.childwelfare.gov or call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 800-843-5678. A report must be filed.

As a matter of policy, US Lacrosse does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child verbal, psychological, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. Chapters and leagues must not either; they should report any suspicions or allegations to the appropriate authority and fully cooperate with the investigation. Additionally, it is a serious violation of this Standard if a staff member and/or volunteer knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the child.

When an allegation of child verbal, psychological, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse is made against a staff member, youth and/or volunteer, the local league or chapter should immediately remove that individual from contact with any children in the program until the allegation has been investigated by an official agency. Membership will be terminated for a conviction of a crime related to an allegation. US Lacrosse may also terminate membership for improper conduct as described in Section Three – Prescribed Conduct. Malicious, frivolous or bad-faith allegations or reporting of sexual or physical abuse is prohibited conduct.

Violations of Section Three - Appropriate Conduct that do not involve a suspicion of child abuse should be reported to the lead administrator or designated athlete safety officer of the local league or chapter. Following a local investigation, a determination for ongoing involvement with the program should be made based on the nature or frequency of the violation. If the conduct requires the member to be removed from contact with youth athletes, a request for termination of US Lacrosse membership can be made through Membership Services. US Lacrosse will remove the member, and the appeal process with the Council of Counselors may be pursued for reinstatement. Removal from the chapter or local program does not automatically terminate US Lacrosse membership. Conversely, a member of US Lacrosse may be excluded from particular chapter and local organization activities.

Chapters and local organizations should develop specific guidelines and procedures to implement these requirements, including state and local reporting requirements. Section Nine – Best Practices for Chapters and Local Organizations contains recommendations to guide development and implementation.



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

SECTION NINE – APPEAL PROCEDURES

The US Lacrosse Standard for Membership Suspension and Termination will be the guiding document for an applicant, member or certified coach that is found to be ineligible or disqualified from US Lacrosse membership or coach certification.



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

ADDENDUM – GUIDELINES FOR CHAPTERS AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

As an initial guide, procedures borrowed from other national governing bodies are suggested in this addendum to guide chapters and local organizations.

The Safety Education Subcommittees of the US Lacrosse Men's Game Committee and Women's Game Committee have agreed to assist staff of US Lacrosse with this work and update these best practices to support the lacrosse community in developing effective ways to protect youth lacrosse athletes. This should take place every two years.

Reporting and responding to abuse at the local level should occur at two levels of concern. When child sexual abuse is suspected it should be reported to law enforcement. When violations of conduct or behavior practices are not believed to be sexual abuse, but inappropriate or higher risk such as being alone with an athlete are suspected, they should be reported and acted upon locally. The United States Olympic Committee has developed an excellent guidebook available at <http://safesport.org/>. The following parts of a program can serve as a starting point.

- (A) An Athlete Safety Director should be appointed by the leader for the chapter or local organization in any matters related to this standard. A small standing Committee for Athlete Safety should also be formed under the leadership of the Athlete Safety Director and include the senior leader or administrator for the chapter or local organization. Minimum requirements for this position/committee include:
 - (1) Determine local and state reporting requirements for sexual and physical abuse of minors. Develop written policies to require that all members know what they are and how to follow them. Suspected sexual abuse must be reported to law enforcement, not investigated, then reported.
 - (2) Develop a reporting process that allows for suspected activities that are not believed to be sexual abuse, but inappropriate or higher risk such as being alone with an athlete, to be reported to the Athlete Safety Director, chapter or local organization leader, and US Lacrosse Council of Counselors.
 - (3) Develop a response plan for action when an allegation is made. It should include at an absolute minimum: separation of the parties involved, protection for the minor, confidentiality as possible, reporting to authorities as required locally, and notification of the US Lacrosse Council of Counselors.
 - (4) Publicize the reporting process of the chapter or local organization to all youth athletes and their parents.
- (B) Chapters and local organizations should consider adopting the following recommended behaviors when trying to develop guidelines to assist adults:



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

- (1) One-to-One Interactions. There may be situations that are appropriate one-on-one interactions with athletes or participants. For example, an individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, training program, or competition schedule. Under these circumstances, coaches, staff members and/or volunteers are to observe the following guidelines:
 - (a) Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.
 - (b) Where possible, an individual meeting should take place in a publicly visible and open area, such as the corner of a gym or the sideline.
 - (c) If an individual meeting is to take place in an office, the door should remain unlocked and open.
 - (d) If a closed-door meeting is necessary, the coach, staff member and/or volunteer must inform another coach, staff member and/or volunteer and ensure the door remains unlocked.
- (2) Individual Training Sessions. An individual training session with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. However, such session(s) are subject to the following:
 - (a) Under these circumstances, written permission of a minor athlete's parents or guardians is required in advance of the individual training session(s).
 - (b) US Lacrosse encourages parents and guardians to attend the training session(s).
- (3) Prohibited One-to-One Interactions with Athletes or Participants
 - (a) Except as set forth above, minor athletes and participants will not be left unattended or unsupervised during team activities.
 - (b) Team coaches, staff members and/or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual athlete or participant in any room or building.
- (4) Physical Contact with Athletes. Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, staff members, contractors or volunteers 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, rules for physical contact must be set to reduce the potential for misconduct in sport. The following principles and guidelines in regards to physical contact with minors should be maintained:
 - (a) 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:



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

- (i) the physical contact takes place in public.
 - (ii) there is no potential for sexual intimacies during the physical contact.
 - (iii) the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult.
- (b) Safety During Appropriate Physical Contact. The safety of the athletes is paramount and in many instances we make the athletic space safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:
- (i) the physical contact takes place in public,
 - (ii) 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,
 - (iii) making athletes aware that they might be in harm's way because of other athletes practicing around them or because of equipment in use,
 - (iv) for injury evaluation or treatment by a coach, athletic trainer, or other qualified medical personnel.
- (5) Celebration. Sports are physical by definition and we recognize participants often express their joy of participation, competition, achievement and victory through physical acts. These public expressions of celebration are encouraged, which include:
- (a) Greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs.
 - (b) Congratulatory gestures—such as celebratory hugs, “jump arounds” and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment.
- (6) 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:
- (a) Publicly embracing a crying athlete.
 - (b) Putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them in an effort to calm them down (“side hugs”).
 - (c) Lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface and “dusting them off” to encourage them to continue competition.
- (7) Prohibited Physical Contact. Prohibited forms of physical contact, which shall be reported immediately include, without limitation:



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

- (a) Asking or having an athlete sit in the lap of a coach, administrator, staff member or volunteer.
 - (b) Lingering or repeated embraces of athletes that go beyond the criteria set forth for physical contact.
 - (c) Slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from an athlete.
 - (d) “Cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact during any aspect of training, travel or overnight stay.
 - (e) Playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., tickling or “horseplay” wrestling).
 - (f) Continued physical contact that makes an athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not.
 - (g) 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.
- (8) Electronic Communications & Social Media. With an 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.
- (a) As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete’s family.
 - (b) If the athlete is under the age of 18, any email, electronic text, social media or similar communication must copy or include the athlete’s parents or guardians.
 - (c) Facebook, MySpace, Blogs & Similar Sites. Coaches should not have athletes of the club, team or organization join a personal social media page.
 - (i) Athlete members and parents can “friend” the official club, team or organization’s page, and coaches can communicate to athlete members through the site.
 - (ii) All posts, messages, text, or media of any kind between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.
 - (d) Twitter, Instant Messaging, and Similar Media.
 - (i) Coaches and athletes may “follow” each other. Coaches should not “re-tweet” athlete message posts.



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

- (ii) All posts between coach and athlete must be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.
- (e) E-mail & Similar Electronic Communications.
- (i) 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.
 - (ii) Where the coach is a staff member and/or volunteer, email from a coach to any athlete should come from the team's website email center (the coach's return email address will contain, for example, "@TEAM.com")
- (f) Texting & Similar Electronic Communications.
- (i) Texting is allowed between coaches and athletes.
 - (ii) All texts between coach and athlete must be professional and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.
- (g) Electronic Imagery
- (i) 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.
 - (ii) These photos and/or videos may be submitted to local, state or national publications, used in team, club or organization's videos, posted on team or team-associated websites, or offered to the team's families seasonally on disc or other electronic form.
 - (iii) Such practices are appropriate 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 team, club or organization.
 - (iv) Imagery must not be inappropriate, contrary to any rules as outlined in a team, club or organization's handbook.
 - (v) 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).
 - (vi) Misconduct with Electronic Communications.
 - (i) Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing).



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

(ii) Such communications by coaches, staff, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated.

(9) Other areas of concern; Prohibition of verbal, physical and psychological abuse

(a) Verbal Abuse – The most commonly occurring type of abuse in sports includes name calling, hurtful comments regarding performance, swearing at players or game officials and comments meant to demean a person’s integrity. Examples:

(i) Coach to player: “Fatty, lose some weight so you can actually get down the court.”

(ii) Coach to team: “You all suck. I thought you were better than that, but I guess I was wrong.”

(iii) Any and all expletives

(iv) Coach to player: “I hope you aren’t proud of yourself. You shouldn’t be.”

(b) Psychological or Emotional Abuse – Includes having unrealistic goals or expectations of athletes, keeping athletes from participating in games or practices because of assumed limits or underdeveloped skills or issuing threats. Examples:

(i) A coach putting the success of a team on the shoulders of one “superstar.”

(ii) Before putting a non-starter in the game a coach says, “I guess we will have to let you play, you’re the only one left.”

(iii) Coach to team: “If we lose any games this season, none of you will be invited back next year.”

(c) Physical Abuse – When coaches use any type of hurtful touch causing physical pain or the use of excessive exercise, denial of fluids and/or imparting unreasonable requests as a form of punishment or a way of creating team discipline. Examples:

(i) Slapping, grabbing, spitting, shoving, hitting or throwing equipment.

(ii) A team lost and the coach demands that his or her players run around the track until they vomit or pass out.

(iii) Team returns late at night after an away contest and goes right to the gym for a punishment practice.

(d) Bullying – Though bullying can be considered a form of verbal, physical or psychological abuse, bullying is the deliberate, repeated and sometimes health-endangering mistreatment of one person (the target) by a perpetrator (the bully),



Standard for Athlete Safety and Protection *(Effective: June 15, 2013)*

whose destructive actions are fueled by the bully's need to control the target.
Examples:

- (i) Bullying is usually an ongoing physical or verbal mistreatment, where a game of usurping control is perpetuated in an attempt to win while the other loses.
 - (ii) Bullying coaches or players may often target more passive players. As a result, the assaulted person appears to be upset while the bully says things like, "What's the big deal?" or "She asked for it."
- (e) Hazing - Any activity expected by existing team members or coaches themselves of someone joining a team or to maintain full status on a team that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Examples:
- (i) Instances in which coaches or other players know about or are participants in any harmful or degrading initiation rituals involving new players.
 - (ii) These rituals include walking in cooked spaghetti, running through a line of players who mildly assault the player, performing lewd acts or drinking excessive amounts of alcohol.
- (f) The development of any of the above disrespectful relationships between coaches and athletes or athletes with other team-members, compromises the professional integrity of the program and the educational mission of athletics. Coaches exercise power over athletes, whether in giving them praise or criticism, evaluating them, making recommendations that further their athletic goals or conferring any other benefits on them. In the same way, some athletes may exert power over other athletes as a function of the bullying individual's standing with the coaching staff, school, sponsoring organization, playing time, media attention or skill level. The use of derogatory language and intentionally hurtful statements from coach to athlete or among athletes is wrong because coaches and sponsoring schools have a professional responsibility for the players. Such situations greatly increase the chances that an athlete may be personally exploited.