



“Mermaid Softball is committed to providing a safe environment for all members, parents, volunteers and players. Our culture and mission are built on fostering mutual respect and fairness. In adherence with our Code of Conduct for players and volunteers, Sexual Misconduct is a serious violation of those principles and will not be tolerated.

We treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations. We observe a zero-tolerance policy for any violation of this policy and any person in violation of this policy, demonstrated by evidence or argument, will face swift disciplinary and legal action if warranted. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from league

activities and participation. **The following policy pertains to interactions between any league member, volunteer, player, parent, guardian or participant while active at Mermaid Softball League:**

Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. **Examples of conduct or behavior which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:**

- **Physical conduct:** Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching, Physical violence, including sexual assault. Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching, payment for or use of reward to solicit sexual favors.
- **Verbal conduct:** Comments on a person’s appearance, age, private life, etc., Sexual comments, stories and jokes, Sexual advances, Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy, sending sexually explicit messages (by phone, email or Social media) and Insults based on sexual orientation or gender identification.
- **Non-verbal conduct:** Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material, Sexually-suggestive gestures, Whistling, Leering etc.

The **Mermaid Executive Board** must enforce a fair, confidential and strict policy of reporting, investigation and discipline for all reports of sexual misconduct.

1. Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment should, whenever possible, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome.
2. If a person cannot directly approach an alleged harasser, he/she can approach any Executive Board Member *to enlist the Board*, to act on the complaint.
3. **When a complaint of sexual harassment is reported, the Board will:**
  - immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s).
  - Determine the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she expects.
  - Ensure that the victim understands the league procedures for dealing with the complaint.

*If there is a conflict of interest for any Board Member, they will be recused from this process.*

4. **The Board will conduct a thoughtful investigation in consideration of all parties involved:**
- keep a confidential record of all discussions, respect the choice of the victim, ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of Mermaid Softball should they through proper channels i.e. file a police report.
  - Give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint
  - Ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism
  - Facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, or refer the matter to a designated mediator resolve the matter.
  - Follow up after the outcome of the complaint to ensure that the behavior has stopped
  - Ensure that the above is done speedily and within 48 hours or prior to 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday immediately following the day the complaint being made.

**Anyone for whom it has been determined to have violated the sexual misconduct policy, will be subject to any of the following sanctions; the nature of the sanction will depend on the gravity and extent of the violation:**

- Verbal and/or written **WARNING** of disciplinary action.
- **SUSPENSION:** temporary absence to include one or more practices, games, league fields and functions. Suspension may last for any duration deemed suitable per Board discussion.
- **DISMISSAL:** permanent dismissal from all league functions, activities and fields for the remainder of the Season and/or for any duration of time deemed suitable per Board discussion.

**Certain serious cases, including those who report physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser as well as contact with local authorities. Mermaid softball reserves the right to report any such complaint deemed as such.**

All Mermaid players, volunteers and family should consider Mermaid Softball a safe place to be and play. All complaints of sexual harassment will be treated with respect and in confidence. Absolutely no Mermaid Family member will be mistreated, disrespected or penalized for making such a complaint. As such, any person accused will have the right to defend, deny or explain their action.

- **Hearsay, rumor or any flagrant accusation found to be made with malicious intent, will result in the suspension and or dismissal of the accuser.**

It is the responsibility of all parties, players, team staff, volunteers and Board members to take this policy seriously and with gravity. We must all act as reporting agents – “*see something, say something*”!

**Mermaid Softball League, 2020**