



Athlete Abuse Prevention & Mandatory Reporting Policy

Program Commitment

The Washington Panthers Youth Football Program is committed to providing every participant with a safe, positive, and respectful environment. The Program maintains zero tolerance for physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, bullying, hazing, harassment, grooming behaviors, retaliation, or any conduct that threatens the safety or well-being of a participant. Every coach, board member, volunteer, parent, and athlete shares responsibility for protecting children.

Expected Conduct

All coaches and volunteers shall maintain appropriate professional boundaries. One-on-one interactions should occur in observable and interruptible settings whenever reasonably possible. Physical contact must be limited to instruction, safety, or medical care and must always be appropriate. Private electronic communication with athletes should include a parent or guardian whenever practical. Inappropriate language, discrimination, intimidation, sexual misconduct, or retaliation will not be tolerated.

Mandatory Reporting

Any person who witnesses, suspects, or receives information regarding abuse, neglect, grooming behavior, or inappropriate conduct involving a participant must immediately report the concern to the Program Director or Board of Directors. If a child is believed to be in immediate danger or abuse may violate criminal law, law enforcement or the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) should be contacted immediately. Reports made in good faith will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, documented when appropriate, and handled as confidentially as circumstances allow.

Protection & Accountability

Retaliation against any individual who reports a concern in good faith is strictly prohibited. Any coach, volunteer, board member, participant, or parent found to have violated this policy may be immediately suspended pending investigation and may be permanently removed from the Washington Panthers Youth Football Program. The Program reserves the right to cooperate fully with law enforcement and child protection agencies.

Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Washington Panthers Youth Football Program Athlete Abuse Prevention & Mandatory Reporting Policy and agree to support its standards for protecting every participant.

Participant: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____