

Anti-Bullying Policy



1. Introduction

AEL FC Canada is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all players, coaches, parents, and volunteers, both on and off the field. Bullying is a serious issue that can have lasting effects on children and youth. This policy outlines AEL FC Canada's approach to preventing bullying, educating participants, and addressing incidents when they occur.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behaviour among children or youth that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying may be repeated over time or have the potential to be repeated and may include:

- Harassment (verbal, social, or cyber)
- Intimidation or threats
- Physical or emotional abuse
- Exclusion or social isolation
- Retaliation against those who report bullying

Bullying behavior can occur on or off the field and may be directed at players, coaches, parents, or volunteers.

3. Code of Conduct

All members of AEL FC Canada—including players, coaches, parents, volunteers, and staff—are expected to adhere to the club's Code of Conduct, which includes:

- Respect for others regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, or background
- Positive communication and sportsmanship
- Cooperation with coaches, officials, and club leadership
- Reporting bullying or inappropriate behaviour immediately

The Anti-Bullying Policy is an integral part of the Code of Conduct.

4. Coach Education and Prevention

AEL FC Canada will:

- Train all coaches on recognizing, preventing, and addressing bullying behavior
- Provide strategies to promote positive team culture and peer support
- Encourage coaches to implement preventative measures to reduce bullying risks
- Require coaches to model respectful behaviour at all times

Coaches are responsible for monitoring player interactions and ensuring that bullying is not tolerated.

5. Conflict and Resolution Protocol

When a bullying incident is reported, AEL FC Canada follows a structured process:

Step 1: Reporting

- Any bullying incident should be reported to the coach, team manager, coordinator, or Board of Directors member.

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Step 2: Executive Notification

- The coach or adult receiving the report must immediately notify the Club Executive.

Step 3: Parent Involvement

- Parents/guardians of all parties involved will be informed and may be asked to attend a meeting to provide details and context.

Step 4: Police Consultation

- If appropriate, the club may consult law enforcement or child protection authorities.

Step 5: Investigation and Intervention

- The incident will be promptly investigated, and steps will be taken to stop the bullying behavior.

Step 6: Support and Education

- Efforts will be made to help the bully (or bullies) understand the impact of their behavior and correct it through education and support.

Step 7: Disciplinary Action

- If preventative measures and mediation fail, disciplinary actions may be taken according to the club's policies.

6. Recommended Steps for Resolution

Coaches should follow these steps to resolve a bullying incident:

- Reconciliation – Bring the parties together; a genuine apology may resolve the issue.
- Gather Details – If reconciliation is not appropriate or fails, meet with the child alleging bullying and their parent/guardian to collect details. Minutes should be documented.
- Meet the Alleged Bully – Meet with the alleged bully and their parent(s) to present the allegation and collect their response. Minutes should be documented.
- Additional Information – Speak with other individuals who may have relevant information. Document all findings.
- Warning and Notice – If bullying is confirmed, the athlete should be warned and placed on notice regarding future behaviour. Consider whether reconciliation is appropriate.
- Communication – Notify all other coaches involved with both athletes of the concerns and outcome.

7. Compliance with Legislation

This policy aligns with:

- Bill 14, Anti-Bullying Act, 2012 ([Ontario](#))
- Ontario Soccer policies and codes of conduct
- Safe Sport and youth protection principles

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All club members are expected to follow this policy, and the club will take appropriate action when incidents occur.

8. Contact and Reporting

For questions or to report bullying:

AEL FC Canada Email: aelfccanada@gmail.com

