

Vermont Soccer Association Coach Code of Conduct

1. Purpose & Scope

Coaches are leaders, role models, and guardians of a respectful, safe, and inclusive soccer environment. This Code applies to all VSA-affiliated coaches, volunteer or paid, at every level of participation, including practices, games, events, and travels.

2. Core Principles

- **Player-Centered Approach**
Place the safety, well-being, and development of players above all, valuing learning and enjoyment over winning.
- **Ethical Leadership & Respect**
Model dignity, grace, and composure in victory and defeat. Treat players, officials, parents, opponents, and spectators with unwavering respect.
- **Inclusivity & Fairness**
Champion diversity and inclusion, opposing all forms of discrimination including but not limited to race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, and more.

3. Behavioral Standards

- **Respect for Officials & Opponents**
Refrain from criticizing referees. Convey disagreements discreetly and respectfully. Recognize your conduct influences players, parents, and spectators.
- **Safe, Professional Communication**
Avoid profanity, harassment, or intimidation. Criticism must be constructive and never demeaning.
- **Abstinence from Prohibited Substances**
Never coach under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco. Such substances must not be present at any VSA activity.

4. Duty of Care

- **Adhere to Safety Protocols**
Follow VSA and U.S. Soccer Risk Management, SafeSport, and Mandatory Reporting guidelines.

- **One-on-One Interactions**
Avoid unsupervised contact with minors. Communicate transparently and ensure interactions are in full view.
- **Stringent Reporting Responsibilities**
Report any suspected misconduct, grooming, abuse, harassment to appropriate authorities immediately.

5. Education & Development

- **Ongoing Learning**
Engage in coach education, SafeSport, and risk management training to maintain high standards and awareness.
- **Foster a Positive Culture**
Encourage fair play, teach good sporting behavior, uphold the spirit and laws of the game.

6. Enforcement & Accountability

- Violations ranging from unprofessional conduct to safety breaches may result in suspension, removal, or full revocation of coaching privileges following VSA disciplinary processes.