



## SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

### STEPS FOR REPORTING:

This is intended as a quick reference for use in a sporting environment and is not meant to be exhaustive or to replace legal advice. Consult with child welfare, law enforcement and legal counsel if child abuse is alleged or suspected.

1. **Child discloses abuse or abuse is discovered** with the adult involved in the abuse being a coach/volunteer or anyone outside the organization.

\*These steps would also apply when:

- A peer discloses on behalf of another child
- An **adult suspects** a child is abused

2. Coach/volunteer who receives disclosure:
  - **Notifies law enforcement** and/or child welfare about the incident;
  - **Consults with child welfare** about notifying parents; and
  - **Notifies the supervisor/manager**, who in turn notifies the head of the organization.
3. Head of the organization/manager **suspends coach/volunteer** suspected of abuse with or without pay until case is resolved. \* (IF THE SUSPECTED PERSON IS THE COACH/VOLUNTEER) If the individual is a volunteer or unpaid staff, consider if the individual should be dismissed from their position immediately.
4. A child welfare agency and/or police **carry out investigation**. Organization should conduct an internal follow-up in consultation with police/child welfare and adjusts internal policies if needed.

#### →POTENTIAL OUTCOME OF INVESTIGATION:

A) **Substantiated/guilty**. Parent/person may be removed from their child.  
Coach/volunteer is dismissed from his/her position. \*

B) **Inconclusive/not guilty**+. Seek legal counsel. (If it is the coach under suspicion, then consider if coach/volunteer should be dismissed, with or without severance.)

+ Criminal processes can be complex and lengthy. A finding of not guilty may not necessarily mean that the abuse did not occur. **Consult with a lawyer.**

5. • **Document the outcome** of the investigation on the incident report form.  
• **Document the results** of the internal follow up.

\*NOTE:

Seek legal guidance prior to suspension and/or dismissal.