



City of Hendersonville – Safe Sports Act Policy

Senate Bill 534, *Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017* has been signed into law, becoming effective immediately. The bill imposes a duty on amateur sports organizations and its members, to report suspected sex-abuse to local or federal law enforcement or to a child-welfare agency designated by the Justice Department, within 24 hours. Failure to report is subject to criminal penalties.

- The bill amends the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 to **extend the duty to report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 24 hours to all adults who are authorized to interact with minor or amateur athletes** by a national governing body, a member of a national governing body, or an amateur sports organization that participates in interstate or international amateur athletic competition. These individuals are called “covered individuals” in the new legislation.
- Child abuse is defined as physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment of a child.
- Per current federal regulations, reports of child abuse should be made to the local law enforcement agency or local child protective services agency that has jurisdiction to investigate reports of child abuse or to protect child abuse victims or to the FBI.
- An individual who is required, but fails, to report suspected child sexual abuse is subject to criminal penalties including fines and up to one (1) year in jail.
- These obligations are in addition to any State law requirements that an individual may have in a particular jurisdiction.

All organizations associated with the Hendersonville Parks Department must abide by all policies and procedures to prevent any type of abuse. They also must comply with all reporting requirements, establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between athletes who are minors and an adult, offer and provide consistent training to members who are in contact with minors, as well as establish ways to prohibit retaliation against the victim. Importantly, members of and participants in Hendersonville Parks leagues and sponsored programs are required to report any suspected sexual misconduct to the U.S. Center for SafeSport <https://www.safesport.org/report-a-concern>, as well as the Hendersonville Parks Department 615-822-3898.