

## Risk Management

*How is risk management administered now and how will that change?*

The current risk management process involves a statewide background check through the Washington State Patrol's WATCH database every two years. Applicants apply through a Bonzi link and their RMA status is manually managed by a WA Youth Soccer staff member in multiple registration systems like Bonzi, Korrio, and TeamSideline.

WA Youth Soccer is creating a new single-source risk management database in Affinity which will run national background checks through BackgroundChecks.com. The new risk management process will go into effect July 15, 2013, and will coincide with a move to an annual background check that will expire each year on July 15<sup>th</sup>.

The main focus of the 2013 Registrar Summit was the new risk management system – what will change and how WA Youth Soccer can support the clubs and associations in managing this transition. Great questions and comments about what these changes will mean for local members prompted WA Youth Soccer to assemble the below set of frequently asked questions. This is a summary of the conversation for those who were not present and allows WA Youth Soccer to follow up with responses to action items that came out of the summit.

*When does the new process start?*

The new risk management process will go into effect beginning July 15, 2013. WA Youth Soccer will work with all clubs and associations to open up the Affinity link in early July to allow member organizations to get a jump-start on the move and we are happy to work with each organization to address their local needs.

In response to the feedback from registrars across the state, we are committed to supporting a phased transition away from the current risk management approval given through the WATCH program into the new system in Affinity. Volunteers who are cleared in the current risk management system as of July 15<sup>th</sup> are still approved to participate in WA Youth Soccer activities until they are able to apply for the national background check, prior to the September 1 start of the 2013-2014 seasonal year. We encourage new volunteers to directly apply in Affinity as they are registered with their club or association.

WA Youth Soccer staff will be dedicating support to local member organizations throughout this transition and are happy to answer any questions the clubs and associations may have.

*What is the expiration date for risk management statuses?*

Risk management statuses will now expire annually on July 15<sup>th</sup> – the previous policy was for expiration to occur on the applicant's birth date every two years.

*Who needs risk management approval?*

The policies related to risk management are found in the Risk Management section of the Operating Documents – please refer to this policy for specific questions about the categories of people who should be cleared. In short, any adult who is directly involved with our players in an official capacity, holds an official position within one of our organizations, and all referees twelve years old and above must be cleared through WA Youth Soccer's risk management system.

Examples: club board members, chaperones requested by the club for tournament travel, referees, coaches, team managers, etc.

*What information is required for a background check?*

The below fields are required to run a background check:

**Required Fields**

Legal First Name

Legal Last Name

Gender

Date of Birth

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Email Address

Organization

Registration system Key ID (unique identifier for local registration system)

The below optional fields are not required to run a national background check but ensure more accurate results and prevent false positives for those with common names. Where possible, we encourage you to collect these optional fields in the future:

**Optional Fields**

*Middle Initial/Name*

*Issuing Driver's License State*

*Driver's License #*

*Driver's License Expire Date*

*Role in Organization*

*Who is responsible for approving or rejecting risk management applicants and why?*

WA Youth Soccer, through its Risk Management Director and the WA Youth Soccer Board of Directors, is solely responsible for approving or rejecting risk management applicants.

Because WA Youth Soccer provides insurance coverage for activities sanctioned in its name for all associations and their members organizations as participants in WA Youth Soccer/US Youth Soccer, as well as directors and officers (D&O) coverage for member organizations' officials actions in WA Youth Soccer/US Youth Soccer, WA Youth Soccer shoulders the legal liability for activities of its members.

This benefits member organizations and their officers, volunteers, and staff because it helps to protect local organizations and individuals from the liability associated with determining the risk of approving volunteers for participation with children and in decision-making roles. It also protects the confidentiality of the information surrounding background check information – allowing all applicants to feel comfortable in their community, even if they are not approved to participate in WA Youth Soccer.

*Will registrars be able to see risk management statuses in Affinity?*

Yes, club and association registrars will be given club- and association-level access, respectively, to the new risk management system in Affinity. There will be no change from the current access that registrars experience in Bonzi.

Club registrars will be able to see any risk management application records for applicants who listed that club as their organization during the background check process – e.g. if a coach selects Sequim Soccer

Club during the application process, the Sequim Soccer Club registrar will see the coach's application when the registrar logs into Affinity.

Association registrars will be able to see any risk management applications records for applicants who listed their association or its member clubs as their organization(s) during the background check process – e.g. if a coach selects Sequim Soccer Club during the application process, the Olympic Youth Soccer Association registrar will see the coach's application to Sequim Soccer club when the registrar logs into Affinity.

*Will registrars be able to see the background check information of applicants from their organization?*

Registrars will only see the basic registration information of the applicants in addition to their risk management approval status – no background check results or confidential notes by WA Youth Soccer staff or Risk Management Director will be visible to registrars or applicants.

*Where will the background check link be available?*

The link to the new risk management system in Affinity will be posted on the homepage of [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org) and will be provided to clubs and associations to host on their websites. WA Youth Soccer will distribute this link in early July.

*What does this mean for volunteers?*

Volunteers within WA Youth Soccer member organizations will need to ensure that they have an approved risk management status through the new risk management system in Affinity starting July 15<sup>th</sup>. Depending on the direction from their club and/or association, volunteers will have three ways of applying for risk management:

1. Data provided during registration in their club's registration system will be shared with WA Youth Soccer through an API (application program interface) between the local registration system and Affinity. This is the most seamless approach with the least amount of time spent on the organization's part.
2. Volunteers can directly apply through the Affinity link to WA Youth Soccer's risk management system. This link will be posted on the homepage of [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org) and will be provided to clubs and associations to host on their websites.
3. Club and/or association registrars will export registration data from their local registration system, send it to WA Youth Soccer through a server-based file transfer protocol (FTP), and WA Youth Soccer will upload the registration data into Affinity. This is the most time consuming option and will be available through September 30, 2013.

*What does this mean for registrars?*

As it has been since background checks for volunteers in WA Youth Soccer were instituted, each club and association is responsible for ensuring that its officials, volunteers, and referees are aware of the change in risk management systems and communicate these changes as needed. WA Youth Soccer will be available to provide communications content to assist the local organizations in getting the word out. Because registrars are often the main point of contact, this may mean direct communications from the registrar to all registered coaches, team managers, board members, and other volunteers, as well as the local referee organizations that are used by the clubs and associations for WA Youth Soccer sanctioned activities.

Additionally, depending on the method that each club and association uses to manage volunteers' information being transferred into Affinity, there may be additional tasks required of registrars to manage risk management status on their local registration systems. If there is not an API between the local registration software provider and Affinity, the registrar will need to direct volunteers to apply directly

through Affinity or pull reports from their local registration system for upload into Affinity. Once the background check results have returned in Affinity, the registrar will then need to export those results for upload into or for manual updates to their local registration system.

*What does this mean for WA Youth Soccer?*

WA Youth Soccer will now have a single risk management database where WA Youth Soccer owns the data and is legally liable for the maintenance of the data. This means that all risk management data will be in one database, will enable WA Youth Soccer to receive a bulk rate discount on national background checks through BackgroundChecks.com, and will provide the opportunity for local registration software vendors to write APIs to enable almost-seamless transfers of data between systems – reducing the long-term workload on local clubs and associations.

*What happens to members who use Bonzi and Korrio for registration?*

WA Youth Soccer has been in contact with both Bonzi and Korrio since the new risk management system and player fee increase dedicated to risk management was approved by the Association Presidents, District Commissioners, and WA Youth Soccer Board of Directors at the January 2013 Annual Player Fee Meeting.

We continue to communicate with your vendors to look for solutions, short-term and long-term, to enable local member organizations to continue using any registration vendor they choose while following a “write data once” philosophy. Our goal is for all vendors to work with WA Youth Soccer to write APIs between registration systems for the benefit of our members and their customers. We encourage you to continue to communicate with your vendors.

*Who updates the risk management status in the registration systems used by local clubs and associations?*

WA Youth Soccer will be maintaining a single risk management database in Affinity and will keep all applicants’ statuses in this database. We are working with registration software vendors to enable club and association registrars to have the ability to update risk management statuses, based on an approved risk management status in Affinity.

In order to facilitate the transition into the new risk management system, WA Youth Soccer is committed to assisting with updating statuses in Bonzi and Korrio through September 30, 2013.

*How can a risk management rejection be appealed?*

Information on how to appeal a risk management decision can be found on the [Risk Management Application page](#) on [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org).

*Who is notified if a volunteer is rejected for risk management approval?*

Currently, the volunteer who is rejected is directly notified by the WA Youth Soccer Risk Management Director, with the volunteer’s Association President and District Commissioner also receiving notice, through a letter sent via mail and email. Based on feedback during the discussion, we are evaluating the addition of Club President to the notification list.

*What about referees?*

WA Youth Soccer requires that all referees, ages 12 and up, are approved through WA Youth Soccer’s risk management system in order to be assigned to WA Youth Soccer sanctioned activities (such as league and tournament games). More information will be available in the next few weeks.

*Where can we find more information on risk management?*

[www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org) lists information about risk management under the Resources tab. Resources related to other risk management topics, such as goal post safety and lightning, are also available.

In addition, the Risk Management section of the Operating Documents details the policies and procedures related to risk management – these documents can be found in the Forms & Downloads section of the website by using the “Filter by Category” feature to select “Operating Documents.”

### **Ongoing Action Items**

As features are update to the request of members, we will incorporate these changes into upcoming training information and will distribute to all clubs, associations, and districts. Below is an update on a few specific issues:

- Duplicate records in Affinity – in process
- Date range field on Affinity export reports – in production
- Multiple organizations listed for applicants – in process
- Notification communications – in process

Training materials, including screen shots and a short video, will be available by July 1, with an anticipated launch of the Affinity link in early July.

### **Fiduciary Duty and Conflict of Interest**

If you are elected to serve on your club or association board of directors, you are a fiduciary of that organization – entrusted with acting in the best interest of the organization, above personal interests. This is a legal duty required by the State of Washington's Nonprofit Corporations Act.

This also requires the disclosure of any potential or actual conflicts of interest to the board of directors. [Read more about conflict of interest in this Set Plays blog post on the topic](#), which includes examples from youth soccer situations.

For more information on fiduciary duties, read this [past blog post at our Set Plays blog](#) and review the WA Secretary of State's [Charity & Nonprofit Board Service in WA State quick guide](#).

### **Insurance Coverage**

WA Youth Soccer provides three types of insurance as a benefit to the members while participating in US Youth Soccer/WA Youth Soccer sanctioned activities:

- Excess/secondary medical claim coverage for injuries, which players receive through paying the WA Youth Soccer player fee
- Certificate of Insurance (facilities insurance) for facilities used in sanctioned activities, including those owned by schools and parks (this includes facilities used for fundraisers)
- Directors and Officers (D&O) coverage for officials acting on behalf of WA Youth Soccer through a member organization - this covers club, association, and district board members, committee members, etc.

The key point to remember is that these insurance policies only cover US Youth Soccer/WA Youth Soccer sanctioned activities and actions – they do not cover participation or board discussion/action on behalf of other soccer organizations.

More information on insurance can be found on the Insurance page under Resources on [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org).

### **Operating Documents – Rules, Policies, and Procedures for WA Youth Soccer**

Formerly in the Administrative Handbook, the policies and procedures of WA Youth Soccer are now housed in the Operating Documents. The documents are broken into 9 main sections, with internal procedures in accompanying documents as necessary: judicial, registration, events, competition, information, rules of competition, risk management, coaching, and administrative structure.

The Soccer Operations Committee is responsible for maintaining the operating documents and review the documents on a rotating quarterly basis each year. Common topics like roster sizes, field dimensions, and the disciplinary process are all covered in these documents, which can be found in by selecting the Operating Documents category on the Forms & Downloads page of [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org).

Contact one of the committee representatives to propose edits or ask questions about these documents – the committee is made up of District Commissioners, representatives of the level of play subcommittees (Regional Club Subcommittee, Select Subcommittee, and Recreation Subcommittee), TOPSoccer chair, Soccer Across WA chair, WA Youth Soccer staff, two WA Youth Soccer Board Directors, as well as other representatives as needed by the committee.

### **Player Registration and Invoicing**

Chuck Porter is in charge of invoicing associations for player fees. Player fees are invoiced 2-3 times per year. Players must be registered to receive insurance coverage and player registration records are used

to process medical claims. For more information on player fee invoices, please contact Chuck at [cporter@washingtoneyouthsoccer.org](mailto:cporter@washingtoneyouthsoccer.org).

### Age Verification and Player Age Chart

Association Registrars are responsible for verifying proof of age documents for initial registration with WA Youth Soccer or its member organizations (Registration section of the Operating Documents – RG-3.5). Refer to the Registration section of the Operating Documents for more information on what documents qualify for proof of age.

Additionally, the player age chart determines what age group is appropriate for a player. US Youth Soccer sets the player age start date as August 1<sup>st</sup> of every year. If a player is born July 31 or earlier, they cannot play down with players born August 1<sup>st</sup> or later of that same birth year. The rule of thumb is that is permissible for a player to play up in age, but not down in age, with the only exception being an approved medical play down.

### Medical Play Downs

A parent of a child who is considering participating in Washington Youth Soccer playing small-sided or recreational soccer may request a medical play down exception to allow the player to play down in age one year if the following criteria are met:

The child's physician will submit a letter with the following information.

- Brief explanation of the child's medical condition.
- How specifically will the player benefit from playing with children one year younger?
- Does the player pose a danger to children younger than the player during physical activity?

The parent shall submit:

1. Physician Statement
2. Signed Hold Harmless agreements
3. Completed Play Down Form with Medical Release
4. Copy of the state issued birth certificate

A medical play down exception once approved is only in affect for the seasonal year and expires at the end of the regular season. Forms can be found in the Forms & Downloads section of the Resources tab on [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org).

### Out-of-State Travel and Player Releases

Per US Youth Soccer and Washington Youth Soccer travel policy, any team wishing to travel outside the state of Washington must submit a properly completed Travel Application Packet to their Member Association and Washington Youth Soccer prior to the date of travel. With the exception of Idaho, Montana, Arizona and Oregon, Washington teams may not travel out of Washington State without permission from their Member Association and Washington Youth Soccer. Travel applications are proof that the team, players and adults are registered with Washington Youth Soccer. Players listed on the travel roster must be currently registered with Washington Youth Soccer and all adults must have a current Risk Management Acceptance (RMA) by Washington Youth Soccer. Information about this process can be found in the Administrators section of Resources on [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org).

Players wishing to be released to another state for league or State Cup play, ODP tryouts, or because of a permanent move to another state during the seasonal year must submit a Permission to Play in Neighboring State form (sometimes called an Interstate Permission form). This form can be found in the Players category in the Forms & Downloads section on [www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org).

### **International Clearances**

When a player comes from a foreign country after the age of 12 years old, US Soccer requires an international clearance process. For information on this process, visit [the US Soccer webpage on the international clearance process](#).