



## **AYSO Region 58 Concussion Policy and Procedures**

AYSO provides national guidelines for concussion policy and procedures. In addition, AYSO mandates that every region should comply with their own state's concussion laws. Effective Jan 1, 2017 California has a new law: AB 2007. AYSO policy and CA laws are designed to protect athletes from the harms of concussion. Since healthcare providers are not available to evaluate and manage concussions at games and practices, it is essential that athletes, parents, coaches, referees and administrators are all educated as to the signs, symptoms and management of concussion. In order to meet all AYSO requirements **and** CA state law requirements, Region 58 implements the following Concussion Policy:

### **Pre-season:**

All coaches, referees and administrators must undergo mandatory concussion training (such as the CDC "Heads Up Program" which can be completed online via the AYSO or CDC website). The RRA is responsible for compliance of the referees and the RCA is responsible for compliance of the coaches prior to certification. The RC or a designated ARC will be responsible for compliance of board members. Concussion training is required to be repeated every 2 years.

Players and parent/guardians must sign the Parent/athlete Concussion information sheet. This is required to be e-signed at the time of online player registration.

### **At practices and games:**

At any game, practice or other AYSO sanctioned event, an athlete is to be removed from play if he or she is suspected of suffering a brain injury or is displaying any of the signs or symptoms of concussion (as described in the online training course and on the concussion information sheet). Remember: "When in Doubt, Sit them Out." The player, the player's parent/guardian, the player's coach, the Center Referee, and Regional Board Members all individually have the authority to remove the player: a consensus is not required. If any one of them decide to remove the athlete from play then the athlete is not allowed to return to any practices or games until they have completed all of the steps below and final clearance is provided by the Safety Director. Other witnesses to a potential head injury do not have authority to remove a player, but are encouraged to report their concerns to any person who is authorized. If an AYSO sponsored Certified Athletic Trainer is present, they have authority to remove the player, but they cannot clear a player to return to play.

Referees are required to follow the AYSO referee action plan regarding concussion and coaches are required to follow the AYSO coach action plan regarding concussion. According to these action plans the following must occur (regardless of which individual initiates the removal from play):

- Coach:
- Request the Referee to stop play. (or if during practice, coach will stop practice)
  - Remove athlete from play.
  - Keep athlete out until after final clearance from AYSO Safety Director.
  - Inform athlete and parent/guardian about possible concussion and provide them with CDC fact sheet on concussion.
  - Inform parent/guardian about SAI information on AYSO.org

Inform parent/guardian that athlete will not be allowed to return to play in games or practice until he/she has been cleared by a healthcare professional (MD or DO) experienced in evaluation of concussions and that healthcare professional has completed the AYSO Concussion Release Form  
Complete AYSO incident report within 48 hrs and notify the Safety Director and Division Manager  
Obtain signed AYSO Participation release from parent/guardian  
Obtain signed Medical release (which is the Concussion Release Form) from parent/guardian  
Submit all 3 completed forms to Safety Director

Safety Director: Collect and submit the following to: [insuranceclaims@ayso.org](mailto:insuranceclaims@ayso.org)  
Completed AYSO Incident Report  
Signed Participation Release  
Copy of signed Player Registration Form  
Copy of SAI claim

Referee: If concussion is suspected or the coach request the player to leave the field, whistle to stop play.  
Call coach onto field.  
Remove athlete from play.  
File supplemental game report of the incident.  
Notify Safety Director.

### **Return to play:**

If the healthcare provider has determined that a concussion or other brain injury **has not** occurred, then return to play will follow the guidelines for all other injuries which includes the completion of the Incident Report Form and the Participation Release Form.

If the healthcare provider has determined that a concussion or other brain injury **has** occurred, then the following return to play steps must be taken:

The Safety Director must receive & review completed: AYSO Incident report form  
AYSO Participation release form  
AYSO Concussion release form

Once the forms have been received, the Safety Director will notify the coach that the player is cleared to follow the graduated return to play protocol (if they have not begun so already). This protocol can be reviewed on the concussion training course and can be implemented by coaches in coordination with the healthcare professional (or can be begun by the athlete on their own in coordination with the healthcare professional) but must include the following steps:

- Step 1: Physical rest until symptoms have resolved
- Step 2: Low intensity exercise
- Step 3: Moderate intensity exercise
- Step 4: High intensity exercise and non-contact soccer specific drills

### Step 5: Full contact soccer practice

A minimum of a 24 hr period must occur between each step. Steps 1-3 may allow the athlete to be at soccer practice to observe practice and participate in those steps during practice time but separate from the team. Steps 4 and 5 may occur with the team during practice. If symptoms return at any step then the athlete is to be held out from further exercise or practice and the parent/guardian and healthcare provider are to be notified.

Once the return to play protocol has been completed **and** it has been a minimum of 7 days since the head injury occurred, then the coach must notify the Safety Director. The Safety Director will then provide final clearance for the athlete to return to play in any AYSO sanctioned event. The Safety Director will keep a record of all forms and of the date of clearance for return to play of the athlete.

### **Compliance and enforcement of the Concussion Policy:**

Any coach, referee, administrator, parent or player found to be in violation of the concussion policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including permanent suspension from AYSO.