

ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL KWAME RAOUL

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Contact:

PressOffice@ilag.gov

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES NATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE
AND U.S. SOCCER FEDERATION TO REMEDY SYSTEMIC MISCONDUCT**
Raoul and New York Attorney General James Call to Protect Players from Harassment and Abuse

Chicago – Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul and New York Attorney General Letitia James today urged the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) and the U.S. Soccer Federation to foster a professional environment of respect and accountability after a recent independent investigation found widespread abuse and misconduct in women's professional soccer.

The detailed findings in the Oct. 3, 2022 [report](#) allege that NWSL and U.S. Soccer, both headquartered in Chicago, failed to provide adequate oversight, implement appropriate workplace policies or respond to complaints of misconduct in women's professional soccer. In a [letter](#) sent to NWSL and U.S. Soccer, Raoul and James support the recommendations provided in the report to hold wrongdoers accountable, enhance transparency and ensure players are treated with respect.

“I was shocked and disappointed to learn of the alarming allegations in women's professional soccer. Under no circumstance should anyone face such abuse, which is why my office is committed to enforcing anti-harassment laws,” said Raoul. “I am proud to join my friend and colleague Letitia James to insist these organizations not only address the allegations but also ensure they have a detailed prevention plan to avoid such abuse in the future.”

The investigation, which was led by former Acting U.S. Attorney General Sally Q. Yates, documents patterns of multiple incidents of extensive misconduct, harassment and abuse by NWSL coaches, creating an unsafe environment for players. The report also alleges that NWSL and U.S. Soccer did not respond to or rectify years' worth of sexual misconduct complaints. According to the report, this abuse was rampant across women's soccer teams nationwide, including the Chicago Red Stars and youth soccer in Illinois, the Western New York Flash, and the NJ/NY Gotham (formerly called Sky Blue).

Raoul and James' letter requests that NWSL and U.S. Soccer provide specific plans to implement the urgent recommendations included in the report no later than Feb. 1, 2023.

Illinois law specifically prohibits any employer, employee, or agent of any employer from engaging in harassment or sexual harassment in the workplace under the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA). The IHRA states that an employer is responsible for misconduct if they are aware of the issue but do not take reasonable corrective measures. It also strictly prohibits retaliation against individuals who report misconduct.

Raoul's Civil Rights Bureau enforces state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting harassment and discrimination in Illinois. Raoul encourages anyone who has experienced workplace harassment or discrimination to contact his office by visiting his website, emailing CivilRights@ilag.gov, or by calling the Civil Rights Hotline at 1-877-581-3692.