



## **USA Gymnastics Background Screening Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

USA Gymnastics requires background searches for individuals involved with our programs to ensure a safe and secure environment for participants and members. Consistent with our responsibility to protect the best interest of the participants in the sport of gymnastics, USA Gymnastics has selected the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) to perform background checks on all Professional, Introductory Coach or Instructor members as a prerequisite for membership.

### **2. Individuals Subject to Background Check**

Background searches shall be conducted concerning all USA Gymnastics Professional, Introductory Coach and Instructor Members over the age of 18. All new Professional, Introductory Coach, and Instructor Members shall have a background search completed as a condition for membership in USA Gymnastics. Current Professional, Introductory Coach and Instructor members shall have a background check completed as a condition for continued membership in USA Gymnastics. The background check for current Professional Members will be performed every two years at the time of their membership renewal.

Background searches shall also be conducted concerning all USA Gymnastics Board Members, Executive Committee Members, and USA Gymnastics staff members upon their initial appointment, election, or hire and every 2 years thereafter.

### **3. Search Organization**

The National Center for Safety Initiatives (“NCSI”) shall be the authorized search organization that performs background searches for USA Gymnastics. NCSI is a full-service screening organization that works in accordance with the Recommended Guidelines established by the National Council on Youth Sports (“NCYS”). NCSI operates as an independent company, but is owned and governed in partnership with NCYS.

In addition to conducting the background search, NCSI shall be responsible for interpreting the search results, communicating with the applicant regarding the search result, and reporting to USA Gymnastics all search results. NCSI will also be responsible for complying with the Fair Credit Reporting Act and maintaining the confidentiality of information obtained throughout the background search process.

#### **4. Registration for Background Check**

NCSI will develop a background check authorization and disclosure form for USA Gymnastics members via a secure website. NCSI will provide USA Gymnastics with the website information so that USA Gymnastics can communicate with its members on how to access the site and register for a background check. Each member must complete the online background check authorization and disclosure form prior to registration for a background check with NCSI.

#### **5. Information to be Checked**

All individuals screened for USA Gymnastics shall undergo a background check that includes:

- Two independent national databases;
- Sex offender registries of all available states;
- Social Security Number and address verification;
- Federal terrorist database search; and
- Non-database (county courthouse runner) searches of county criminal records of all jurisdictions of residence in the past seven years.

#### **6. Findings**

NCSI will issue results to the applicant and USA Gymnastics based on a “Red Light/Green Light” system. A “Green Light” or “meets the criteria” finding indicates an individual is suitable for participation in USA Gymnastics with regard to the background search. A “Red Light” finding means the individual “does not meet the criteria.” If questions arise concerning a background search, the applicant will be contacted by NCSI and provided with an opportunity to correct potential errors in the applicant’s record or to provide additional information prior to issuing a “Red Light.” In such situations USA Gymnastics may also be contacted.

A conviction (or the entry of any plea of guilty or no contest) or disclosure from an applicant that contains the following information will be flagged as a “Red Light” or “does not meet the criteria”:

- Any felony (any crime punishable by confinement of greater than one year);
- Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person;
- Any lesser crime in which sexual relations is an element, including “victimless” crimes of a sexual nature (including pornography);
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol);
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals; or
- Any sex offender registrant.

Additionally, the following information will result in further investigation involving the applicant and the appropriate courts, which will then lead to a determination of either a “Red Light” or a “Green Light”:

- An arrest for a criterion offenses with no disposition noted;
- An expunction, restoration of rights, or pardon relating to a criterion offense;
- Any charge involving a minor resulting in a disposition favorable to the applicant;  
or
- An arrest or conviction where it is not readily apparent if drugs or alcohol were involved.

The above criteria are contained within the guidelines developed by the NCYS and have been adopted by NCSI. The NCYS considers the criteria for a “Red Light” or “does not meet the criteria” findings to be consistent with the principles of the federal PROTECT Act of 2003.

## **7. Review of Background Search Findings**

Should an applicant contest the content of a record provided to the applicant as part of the USA Gymnastics background search, the applicant may seek an appeal of the record with NCSI pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

USA Gymnastics will use the determinations provided by NCSI, in accordance with the USA Gymnastics Bylaws Article 9 Membership, to determine an individual’s eligibility for membership in USA Gymnastics. Should an individual contest a USA Gymnastics decision to deny participating based upon a “Red Light” finding resulting from the background search, the applicant has the right to appeal the decision pursuant to Article 10 of the USA Gymnastics Bylaws.