

Section I: USA Gymnastics Membership Requirements

New additions are highlighted

Membership is required for participation as a coach, judge or athlete in USA Gymnastics sanctioned events. Visit the USA Gymnastics Member Services website to review the various memberships available and the detailed benefits associated with each. [MEMBER SERVICES](#)

I. ATHLETE MEMBERSHIP

100% of the Athletes appearing in a USA Gymnastics Sanctioned Event must be pre-registered Athlete members of USA Gymnastics and must be able to produce or have their coach supply a current, valid registration number assigned by USA Gymnastics Member Services.

- A. Only Member Clubs may apply for membership with USA Gymnastics on behalf of an athlete. Athlete's that wish to participate in USA Gymnastics sanctioned events **MUST** be affiliated with a current Member Club.
- B. Athlete Membership is effective once a USA Gymnastics Athlete Member number has been assigned to the competitive athlete.
- C. Online athlete registration is not available for parents / athletes. Online registration must be done through a club administrator.
- D. Athlete Member Numbers are assigned only after:
 1. Proper payment is received. Athlete membership may be applied for online, or by faxing or mailing the forms to Member Services. Memberships are payable either by check (made payable to USA Gymnastics) or by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, Discover or American Express).
 2. The Athlete Member Application form is received fully completed with all required information and signatures. The Athlete Membership application may also be completed and submitted online at the USA Gymnastics web site at www.usa-gymnastics.org.
 - Any application requiring processing in less than the normal three to four week processing time (from receipt in the national office) requires an additional "RUSH" processing fee.
 - The club must keep a copy of every Athlete Member registration form on file.
 - For online registration, Athlete Member cards are also available for printing.
- E. Member benefits are paid out upon receipt of application; therefore, memberships are **nonrefundable** and **nontransferable**.
- F. State and regional rebates will be based on club address, not athlete address.
- G. **Foreign participants:** Athletes, coaches and/or judges from countries other than the United States who wish to participate in USA Gymnastics Sanctioned Events must be registered members.
 1. The USA Gymnastics Member Services department provides a discounted, insurance-only membership strictly for foreign athletes competing in USA meets.
 2. Foreign Memberships do NOT receive benefits of membership other than the required insurance coverage.
 3. The form is available in Forms Section at www.usa-gymnastics.org/forms.
- H. The Athlete Membership is valid for one competitive year, from August 1 through the following July 31.
 1. Members joining at any time during the year will receive benefits for the remainder of the competitive year.
 2. All Athlete Memberships are automatically null and void each July 31.

II. PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- A. Professional Membership with USA Gymnastics is required for participation as an official, coach, judge, meet director or other professional capacity during any USA Gymnastics sanctioned event.
- B. Professional Membership is open to any coach, judge or gymnastics professional who is a minimum of 18 years of age.
- C. Junior Professional Membership is available for 16-17 year-old coaches and judges.
 - 1. Once the individual turns 18 years of age, he/she may keep the Junior Professional Membership until the membership expires.
 - 2. Safety/Risk Management Certification is required for Jr. Professional membership.
 - 3. Junior Professional members must be accompanied by a Professional Member while coaching at USA Gymnastics sanctioned events.
 - 4. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#) or contact Member Services at 1-800-345-4719.
- D. Requirements to obtain a Professional Membership – the following must be obtained to hold a USA Gymnastics Professional Membership:
 - 1. All professional members must complete a Safety / Risk Management Certification course – U101.
 - 2. All professional members must complete a Criminal Background Check with the National Center of Safety Initiatives (NCSI), according to the policies and procedures as outlined on the USA Gymnastics web site.
 - a. Criminal Background Checks are current for two (2) years.
 - b. Current members must apply for a Criminal Background Check at least 3-4 weeks prior to their criminal background check expiration date.
 - 3. Professional Members and Junior Professional Members who are COACHING at sanctioned events must hold a minimum certification level of Instructor Certified in the School of Competitive Gymnastics – U100, USA Gymnastics University, to be on the competition floor of a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event (Instructor, Junior Olympic Development, Junior Olympic Team or National is acceptable). – [Click here](#) for details.
 - 4. All professional members, coaches and judges, must complete the USOC SafeSport course – U110. [Click here](#) for details.
 - a. SafeSport certifications are current for two (2) years.
 - b. Certification is instant upon completing the entire course.
 - 5. Professional Members **JUDGING** at sanctioned events must hold a Judging Certification/Rating appropriate to the highest competitive level you are officiating.
- E. A USA Gymnastics Professional Member must hold a Professional Membership for each and every discipline in which he or she is participating.
 - 1. Women's Professional Membership is required to participate in Women's events.
 - 2. Men's Professional Membership is required to participate in Men's events
 - 3. Rhythmic Professional Membership is required for Rhythmic events.
 - 4. Group Gymnastics Membership is required for Group Gymnastics events.
 - 5. Sports Acrobatics Membership is required for Sports Acrobatic events.
 - 6. Tumbling and Trampoline Membership is required for Tumbling/Trampoline events.
- F. Professional Memberships may be renewed online, or applied for/renewed by phone, fax or mail. [CLICK HERE](#) to obtain a membership application.
- G. Online registration is NOT available to first time members of USA Gymnastics. New members must mail/fax in the registration for membership form. Please note, if you were ever an athlete or have taken an educational course in the past, please contact Member Services before obtaining membership.
- H. The Professional Membership is valid for one competitive year, from August 1 through the following July 31.
- I. Professional memberships are current and valid only after the applicant has received confirmation from the USA Gymnastics Member Services Department or has a current

number listed on the USA Gymnastics web site. A Professional Membership that has been applied for or is in the state of being processed is NOT VALID.

- J. USA Gymnastics reserves the right to revoke or suspend memberships for violations of its conduct standards. (See III. Code of Ethical Conduct)

III. CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

A. Introduction

The mission of USA Gymnastics is to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of gymnastics. USA Gymnastics grants the privilege of membership to individuals and organizations committed to that mission. USA Gymnastics may, therefore, withdraw the privilege of membership or discipline a member where USA Gymnastics determines that an individual or organization's conduct is inconsistent with the mission of USA Gymnastics or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it.

To better serve the interests of those who participate in gymnastics, USA Gymnastics has adopted the Code which follows. This Code is not intended to establish a set of rules that will, by inclusion or exclusion, prescribe the appropriate behavior for members in every aspect of their participation in the sport. Rather, the Code offers general principles to guide the conduct, and the judicious appraisal of conduct, of all USA Gymnastics members (individuals, organizations and clubs/businesses, which are collectively referred to as "Members" and individually as a "Member") in situations that have ethical implications.

This Code cannot further ethical conduct in the sport of gymnastics; that can only come from the personal commitment of the participants in the sport to behave ethically. This Code is offered instead to guide and to affirm the commitment of all Members to safeguard the best interests of the sport by acting ethically at all times.

B. Elements of the Code

1. Participant Relationships.

Members of USA Gymnastics are charged with the responsibility for contributing to an environment that makes participation in the sport a positive and rewarding experience. To achieve that result, each professional and club/business Member has a special obligation to make decisions based on the best interest of the athlete. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Fail to follow the safety guidelines established by USA Gymnastics, or otherwise knowingly subject a participant to unreasonable physical or emotional risk.
- b. Engage in conduct that is unfair including, in particular, attempting to injure, disable or intentionally interfere with the preparation of a competitor.
- c. Engage in conduct toward another participant in the sport that is abusive. USA Gymnastics recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes varies with each coach and each athlete, but it is nevertheless incumbent on everyone involved in the sport to support the development and use of motivational and training methods that avoid conduct that is, or is likely to be perceived as being, abusive.
- d. Attempt to intimidate, embarrass or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging or administering a competition.

2. Non-Discrimination.

Any USA Gymnastics activity or event should be open to any Member properly qualified under the rules of that activity or event. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Restrict the ability of a Member to qualify for or participate in competition because of the Member's association with a particular organization or individual or because of

that Member's race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin or mental or physical disability.

- b. Discriminate in the provision of resources or opportunities to any Member or prospective Member on the basis of race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin or mental or physical disability.

3. Participation.

Every Member participating in a USA Gymnastics activity or event has an obligation to participate to the best of his/her abilities. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Knowingly participate as a judge, coach, athlete or administrator in any activity or event where that judge, coach, athlete or administrator is inadequately prepared, unable to participate or fails to participate to the best of his or her ability.
- b. Engage in behavior that is so disorderly or inappropriate as to interfere with the orderly conduct of the activity or other Members' participation in, or enjoyment of, the activity or event.

4. Commitment to Integrity.

A Member of USA Gymnastics has a responsibility to uphold the integrity of the sport of gymnastics and the rules and regulations that govern it, and to act honestly, openly, fairly and competently. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Knowingly misrepresent the policies or actions of USA Gymnastics or its authorized representatives.
- b. Act on behalf of USA Gymnastics or a Member without appropriate authorization.
- c. Alter, falsify, or omit any information, record or document to intentionally make a false or exaggerated claim or statement or to mislead.
- d. Fail to resort in the first instance to the established procedures for challenging a competitive result, contesting a team selection decision, complaining about the conduct of another Member, or attempting to alter or reverse a policy adopted by USA Gymnastics.
- e. Breach the duty to maintain appropriately established confidences of USA Gymnastics or any Member.
- f. Knowingly make false certifications on membership or event sanction applications or otherwise regarding the involvement of any person permanently ineligible for USA Gymnastics membership, or any person who is listed on a federal or state sex-offender registry, with regard to club/business, event, or advertised activities.
- g. Engage in business practices directed toward another Member that are determined by a court, or other similar adjudicatory body, to be unethical, illegal or a breach of contract.
- h. Incur expenses in furtherance of USA Gymnastics' business that are unreasonable, unnecessary, or unsubstantiated.
- i. Fail to avoid both actual and perceived conflicts of interest in the conduct of business.
- j. Participate in the deliberation or decision-making process about any issue for which the Member has a direct financial interest, unless full disclosure of that interest and meaningful consent is obtained prior to participation.

5. Communication.

Members of USA Gymnastics have a duty to communicate honestly and openly with USA Gymnastics and Members. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Misrepresent competitive achievements, professional qualifications, education, experience, eligibility, criminal record or affiliations.
- b. Knowingly disseminate false or misleading information about another Member.

- c. Misrepresent actions taken or not taken in an effort to show compliance with USA Gymnastics' policies or procedures.
- d. Withhold from athletes' information or resources likely to enhance the athletes' enjoyment of the sport or reduce their risk of injury or illness.
- e. Fail to consult with or inform fully the athlete or the athlete's parents about opportunities made available to the athlete involving competitions, commercial activities or recognition.
- f. Misrepresent the nature or extent of an injury in order to decline an invitation to participate in or withdraw from a competition, training camp or other similar activity.
- g. Misrepresent the nature or extent of an injury in order to participate in (or cause an athlete to participate in) a competition, training camp or other similar activity when such participation is inconsistent with the appropriate medical response to the injury.

This section applies to all forms of communication, including social media.

6. Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Members of USA Gymnastics must ensure that the sport is conducted in an environment free of drug or alcohol abuse. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Use or provide to a third party any drug proscribed by applicable federal, state or municipal law.
- b. Assist or condone any competing athlete's use of a drug banned by the International Olympic Committee, United States Olympic Committee, Federation Internationale de Gymnastique, World Anti-Doping Agency, United States Anti-Doping Agency, USA Gymnastics, or National Collegiate Athletic Association, or, in the case of athletes, to use such drugs or refuse to submit to properly conducted drug tests administered by any of those organizations.
- c. Provide alcohol to, or condone the use of alcohol by, minors; abuse alcohol in the presence of athletes or at USA Gymnastics' activities; or consume alcoholic beverages while a minor.

7. Criminal Conduct.

Members of USA Gymnastics are expected to comply with all applicable criminal codes. This obligation is violated by any Member who:

- a. Has been listed on any State or Federal sexual offender list or registry.
- b. Has been declared a sex offender in any applicable State or Federal jurisdiction.
- c. Has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to a criminal charge or indictment directly or indirectly involving or relating to sexual misconduct, child abuse, or conduct that is a violation of a law or regulation specifically designed to protect minors.

Depending on the nature of the crime, this obligation may be violated by any Member who has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to any felony charge or indictment involving conduct other than that specifically described above.

8. Sexual Misconduct.

Members of USA Gymnastics are expected to promote a safe environment for participants, coaches, officials, volunteers and staff in all gymnastics disciplines, which includes an environment free from sexual misconduct. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Member to:

- a. Solicit or engage in sexual relations with any minor.
- b. Engage in any behavior that utilizes the influence of a professional Member's position as coach, judge, official or administrator to encourage sexual relations with an athlete or participant.

- c. Engage in sexual harassment by making unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

9. Sexual Relationships.

Professional Members of USA Gymnastics must protect the integrity of the sport and the interests of the athletes they serve by avoiding sexual relationships with athletes except where the capacity and quality of the athlete's consent to enter that relationship is beyond question.

C. Enforcement of Code

Compliance with this Code depends primarily upon understanding and voluntary compliance, secondarily upon reinforcement by peers, and, when necessary, upon enforcement through disciplinary action.

Any Member ('Complainant') who believes that another Member of USA Gymnastics has failed to meet such Member's obligations under this Code is, under all but the most egregious circumstances, encouraged to first address that concern directly to that Member. If that action does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the Complainant may file a written complaint with the President, program director or other appropriate staff member of USA Gymnastics. That complaint must be signed and state specifically the nature of the alleged misconduct.

Upon review and consideration of the complaint, which may include written notice to both parties and an opportunity for response, and, where appropriate, additional discussions with the parties; the President or his/her designee may:

- a. Determine that the complaint does not merit further action, or
- b. Refer the complaint, as appropriate, to the state or regional chairs/committees or affiliated organization.

If the complaint has not been disposed of as specified in 1 or 2 above, then, after providing written notice to both parties and an opportunity for response, and, where appropriate, additional discussions with the parties, the President or his/her designee may:

- a. Counsel the Member who is the subject of the complaint and record both the complaint and the nature of the counseling in the Member's permanent record, or
- b. Impose an appropriate sanction or an appropriate relief, or
- c. Process the complaint under Article 9 and/or 10 of USA Gymnastics' Bylaws.

IV. SAFE SPORT POLICY

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The Safe Sport Policy, formerly known as the Participant Welfare Policy, is part of USA Gymnastics' safe sport initiatives and incorporates the authority and jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for Safe Sport. USA Gymnastics policies and procedures related to misconduct are presently under review, and updates to this policy may be necessary in the near future. Available online at usagym.org/SafeSport, changes are effective immediately unless otherwise noted in the policy.

Consistent with the mission of USA Gymnastics,¹ the welfare of gymnastics participants, especially minors, is of paramount concern. When any member - gymnast, participant, coach, official, volunteer or staff member - is subjected to or engages in abuse or misconduct, it undermines the mission of USA Gymnastics and is inconsistent with the best interests of the sport of gymnastics and of the gymnasts USA Gymnastics serves.

USA Gymnastics is committed to promoting a safe environment for its members, gymnasts, participants, coaches, officials, volunteers and staff in all gymnastics disciplines. USA Gymnastics has developed and adopted this policy to set forth the efforts it will undertake to promote a safe gymnastics environment, both solely and in partnership with other necessary parties, including member clubs, parents, gymnasts, the gymnastics community, and the U.S. Center for SafeSport ('Center').

Gymnastics participants must promote a safe, misconduct-free environment for members, gymnasts, participants, coaches, officials, volunteers and staff in all gymnastics disciplines. As such, a "Covered Individual" (as defined below) in accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Center for SafeSport:

- a. is responsible for knowing the information, policies and procedures outlined in:
 - the Center's *SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement* ('Code' or 'SafeSport Code') and its related policies;
 - USA Gymnastics' rules, policies, Bylaws, and Code of Ethical Conduct;
- b. shall refrain from engaging in or willfully tolerating any of the forms of Misconduct and Prohibited Conduct described in the Center's SafeSport Code and USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy;
- c. is subject to the Center's jurisdiction and must comply with the Center's policies, procedures, and SafeSport Code, including with respect to reporting suspected Misconduct and violations of Proactive Policies (as defined below); and
- d. is subject to USA Gymnastics' jurisdiction and must comply with USA Gymnastics' rules, policies, Bylaws, and Code of Ethical Conduct, including with respect to reporting suspected misconduct and violations of Proactive Policies.

A "Covered Individual" is:

- a. Any individual who currently is, or was at the time of a possible SafeSport Code Violation, within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Gymnastics or who is seeking to be within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Gymnastics (e.g., through application for membership), including:
 - Current members (professional, jr. professional, instructor, athlete, introductory athlete)
 - Applicants for membership
 - Individuals who were members of USA Gymnastics at the time of any suspected Misconduct or Prohibited Conduct described in the Center's SafeSport Code or USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy
 - USA Gymnastics staff and Board members
- b. Any individual who is an Athlete or Non-Athlete Participant that USA Gymnastics formally authorizes, approves or appoints to a position of authority over Athletes or to have frequent contact with Athletes, such as persons compensated and/or appointed by USA Gymnastics to perform services at sanctioned activities run by USA Gymnastics National Office or its State and Regional Committees, such as camps, competitions, and educational events, including for example:
 - Events staff - Individuals with access to the field of play

¹ The mission of USA Gymnastics is to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of gymnastics.

- Medical personnel
- Chaperones
- National Team Training Center support staff
- Any other contracted individual working with or around athletes

A “Covered Adult” is a Covered Individual who is 18 years of age or older.

An “unrelated Covered Adult” is a Covered Individual who is not an immediate family member of the gymnast.

A “Covered Minor” is a Covered Individual who is under the age of 18.

An “Athlete” is an athlete member of USA Gymnastics.

A “Non-Athlete Participant” is any of the following members of USA Gymnastics: coach, team staff, medical or paramedical personnel, administrator, official, or other athlete-support personnel, employee, or volunteer who participates in amateur sports programs offered or sanctioned by USA Gymnastics or the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Part I. Misconduct and Prohibited Conduct.

USA Gymnastics has agreed to comply with the safe sport policies of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (‘Center’) and has incorporated into this Safe Sport Policy the provisions of the *SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement* (‘Code’ or ‘SafeSport Code’) by reference. The Center may update its policies at any time and the changes are effective when published. For the most current safe sport rules, policies and procedures, go to www.safesport.org.

USA Gymnastics has adopted the definitions of misconduct and prohibited conduct from the Center’s SafeSport Code as follows.

A. Sexual Misconduct.

Sexual Misconduct is within the exclusive authority of the Center.

A Covered Individual shall not engage in Sexual Misconduct as defined in the SafeSport Code.

B. Other Safe Sport Misconduct.

Other Safe Sport Misconduct – Physical Misconduct, Bullying, Hazing, Harassment, or Emotional/Verbal Misconduct - is within the authority of USA Gymnastics. Upon USA Gymnastics’ request, the Center may, at its discretion, accept a matter involving Other Safe Sport Misconduct.

A Covered Individual shall not engage in Prohibited Conduct, including Physical Misconduct, Bullying, Hazing, Harassment or Emotional/Verbal Misconduct as defined in the SafeSport Code. USA Gymnastics recognizes the process for training and motivating gymnasts varies with each coach and each gymnast. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on everyone involved in the sport to support the development and use of motivational training methods that avoid conduct that is, or is likely to be perceived, as being abusive.

C. Misconduct Related to the Resolution Process.

Misconduct related to the resolution process is within the authority of USA Gymnastics and/or the Center.

The following behavior by a Covered Individual may be considered misconduct as defined in the SafeSport Code: Abuse of Process, Failure to Report, Intentionally Making a False Report, or Retaliation. Any such conduct, including after the resolution of a matter is final, is a violation of this policy and/or the Center's SafeSport Code.

D. Proactive Policies Protecting Against Sexual Misconduct.

Except as set forth in Part II, violations of the Proactive Policies described herein are within the authority of Member Clubs.

USA Gymnastics has adopted the recommendation of the Center to establish Proactive Policies Protecting Against Sexual Misconduct ('Proactive Policies') tailored specifically to the sport of gymnastics that (i) set standards for professional boundaries, (ii) minimize the appearance of impropriety and have the effect of preventing boundary violations and (iii) prohibit grooming tactics.

USA Gymnastics Member Clubs must adopt USA Gymnastics' Proactive Policies outlined below. In addition, Member Clubs are strongly encouraged to adopt more comprehensive Proactive Policies tailored specifically to their club.

1. One-on-one interactions.

- An unrelated Covered Adult shall not be alone with a Minor (a) in a private setting, and (b) in any place that is inappropriate to the professional relationship (i.e., a social setting outside the training or competitive environment). A gymnastics activity conducted within the view and/or earshot of another adult is not considered a one-on-one interaction if it presents a meaningful opportunity for interruption.
- Gymnasts may not reside with an unrelated Covered Adult, nor may a Covered Adult reside with a gymnast's family.

2. Travel.

- When traveling, an unrelated Covered Adult shall not be alone with a Minor.
- For overnight travel, assign gymnasts to hotel rooms with age-appropriate, same-sex teammates.
- Do not allow an unrelated adult to share or be alone in a sleeping room with gymnasts.

3. Social Media and Electronic Communications.

- All e-mails, texts, and posts must be transparent, professional and related solely to gymnastics activities or events. Covered Adults may not have out-of-program contact with gymnasts on social media. (For example, general communication regarding a gymnastics activity or event via a club's social media account is acceptable, but private communication via a coach's and/or an athlete's personal social media account is not acceptable.)
- Covered Adults must distribute electronic and mobile communications to minor gymnasts openly and publicly; for example, with a copy to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or to the entire team transmitted simultaneously.
- Parents and guardians have the right to request that (a) their child not be contacted in any form of electronic communications, or (b) certain information about their child that they designate not be distributed in any form of electronic communications. All such requests will be honored.

4. Photography/Videography.

- Photographs or videos may only be taken (a) in public view; (b) if they observe generally accepted standards of decency; and (c) are both appropriate for and in the best interest of the gymnast.
- Examples of photos that should be edited or deleted:
 - Open straddle positions
 - Any image where the genital area is prominent
 - Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing
 - Suggestive or provocative poses
- Without a parent's (or legal guardian's) consent in the case of a Minor gymnast, or a gymnast's consent in the case of an adult gymnast (a) gymnasts may not be photographed or filmed; and (b) no images of gymnasts may be posted publicly or privately. If consent is given, it may be revoked at any time.

5. Locker Rooms/Changing Areas.

- Interactions between Covered Adults and gymnasts should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, restroom or changing area. A second adult should be present for any necessary interaction between an adult and a gymnast in any such room.
- The use of recording devices of any kind in any such room is strictly prohibited.

6. Gifting.

Gift-giving or providing special favors or privileges to individual gymnasts is prohibited.

7. Massage/Icing/Taping.

- Any rubdown or massage performed on a gymnast by any unrelated Covered Adult must be conducted in open/public locations and must never be done with only a gymnast and unrelated Covered Adult in the room.
- Icing and taping must be conducted in open/public locations and must never be done with only a gymnast and unrelated Covered Adult in the room.
- Icing and taping near the intimate areas of the body is not permitted by any unrelated Covered Adult - unless it is done by a licensed medical professional – and must never be done with only a gymnast and unrelated Covered Adult in the room.

8. Stretching and Other Physical Contact.

Covered Adults should take care to prevent any compromising positions while stretching or closely interacting with gymnasts and must avoid:

- Laying or sitting on top of the gymnast
- Facing the gymnast while he/she is in a static straddle position
- Lap sitting
- Pats on the bottom

Physical contact that is reasonably intended to coach, teach or demonstrate a gymnastics skill or to prevent or lessen injury (e.g., spotting, catching) is permissible. Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the gymnast, participant or coach, does not violate this policy.

Part II. Reporting, Jurisdiction and Processing Complaints.

A. Reporting Suspected Abuse to Legal Authorities.

1. USA Gymnastics will report suspected child abuse or neglect (including Sexual Misconduct) to the proper authorities in all instances and without exception, unless it is aware that authorities have already been notified.

2. Covered Adults must report suspected child abuse or neglect (including Sexual Misconduct) to the appropriate legal authorities, which is separate from notification to the Center, USA Gymnastics, or a Member Club as outlined below. For state-by-state reporting information, see www.childwelfare.gov.

B. Reporting Sexual Misconduct.

Covered Adults are required to provide notification of conduct of which they become aware that could constitute (a) Sexual Misconduct, (b) misconduct that is reasonably related to the underlying allegation of Sexual Misconduct, and (c) retaliation related to an allegation of Sexual Misconduct as set forth in the Code:

1. Directly to the Center.
2. In the event the disclosure is initially made to USA Gymnastics, USA Gymnastics will forward the information to the Center.
3. Notification to the Center and/or USA Gymnastics DOES NOT satisfy any legal reporting requirements under state or federal law. Covered Adults are required to report suspected sexual misconduct to legal authorities prior to notifying the Center.

C. Reporting Other Safe Sport Misconduct.

Members of USA Gymnastics are required to provide notification of conduct by a Covered Individual that could constitute Other Safe Sport Misconduct:

1. Directly to USA Gymnastics.
2. Notification to USA Gymnastics DOES NOT satisfy any legal reporting requirements under state or federal law. If the suspected conduct may also be criminal, persons are required to report to legal authorities prior to notifying USA Gymnastics.

D. Reporting Misconduct Related to the Resolution Process.

Covered Adults must provide notification of suspected Misconduct Related to the Resolution Process:

1. Directly to the Center, if the Center was the entity that had jurisdiction over the original allegation.
2. Directly to USA Gymnastics, if USA Gymnastics was the entity that had jurisdiction over the original allegation.

E. Reporting Violations of Proactive Policies

Members of USA Gymnastics must provide notification of conduct by a Covered Individual that may constitute a violation of Proactive Policies.

1. Directly to the Member Club.
2. Member Clubs are required to inform USA Gymnastics when they receive notification of suspected violations of Proactive Policies by Covered Individuals in their clubs, and the resolution of the matter. USA Gymnastics will also notify the Center of any such notification and its resolution.
3. If reporting a suspected violation by a Covered Individual to the Member Club does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the reporting individual may request that USA Gymnastics review the matter. USA Gymnastics will also notify the Center of any such matter and its resolution.
4. Notification to USA Gymnastics DOES NOT satisfy any legal reporting requirements under state or federal law. If the suspected conduct may also be criminal, Covered Adults are required to report to legal authorities.

F. Jurisdiction.

1. *Sexual Misconduct.* The Center has the exclusive authority to investigate and resolve conduct involving Sexual Misconduct, as well as prohibited conduct under the Code that is reasonably related to the underlying allegation of Sexual Misconduct.

2. *Other Safe Sport Misconduct.* Other Safe Sport Misconduct is within the authority of USA Gymnastics and within the discretionary authority of the Center. Upon the written request of USA Gymnastics, the Center may, in its discretion, accept jurisdiction over alleged violations of Other Safe Sport Misconduct.
3. *Related Violations.* Alleged violations of Misconduct Related to the Resolution Process will be resolved by either the Center or USA Gymnastics, depending on which entity has/had jurisdiction over the original allegation.
4. *Proactive Policies.* Violations of Proactive Policies are within the authority of the Member Clubs. However, if reporting the suspected violation to the Member Club does not result in a satisfactory resolution, an individual may request that USA Gymnastics review the matter. Additionally, upon the written request of USA Gymnastics, the Center may, in its discretion, accept jurisdiction over alleged violations of Protective Policies.

G. Telephone Inquiries.

At least two USA Gymnastics staff members, one of each gender, shall be trained to receive telephone inquiries regarding misconduct. The staff members shall:

1. Advise the caller that they, as well as USA Gymnastics has an obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities, unless it is aware that the authorities have already been notified.
2. Inform the caller that allegations of Sexual Misconduct must be reported to the Center and provide the caller with the information necessary to notify the Center and/or forward the information the caller has provided directly to the Center on their behalf.
3. Inform the caller that if the matter has not been referred to the Center, a written and signed complaint must be received for a USA Gymnastics member to initiate a grievance against another member of USA Gymnastics pursuant to its Code of Ethical Conduct and/or Articles 9 and/or 10 of USA Gymnastics Bylaws and offer to provide a copy of the relevant documents to the caller.
4. Encourage that the victim(s) seek professional help, if appropriate.
5. Written summaries detailing the call will be indexed by the alleged perpetrator and will become a part of any applicable file to use as part of the resolution process.

H. Implementation of USA Gymnastics' Misconduct/Grievance Procedures.

At least two USA Gymnastics staff members, one of each gender, shall be trained in the proper implementation of the member misconduct and grievance procedures contained in the Center's SafeSport Code, USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct, and/or USA Gymnastics Bylaws.

1. A trained staff member will be designated to implement the procedures for each complaint.
2. The designated staff member will determine whether or not the accused is a Covered Individual.
 - a. If the accused is a Covered Individual, the matter will proceed in accordance with the existing applicable policy.
 - b. If the accused is not a Covered Individual, the staff member will notify the complaining party, as a courtesy, that USA Gymnastics is unable to pursue the matter internally.
3. The designated staff member will "shepherd" the complaint through the process set forth in the USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct or its Bylaws.

I. Referral to the Center.

1. One staff member will be designated as USA Gymnastics' safe sport liaison to the Center.
2. The designated staff member will:
 - a. If the matter involves possible Sexual Misconduct, report that matter to the Center.

- b. As appropriate, make requests for the Center to resolve a complaint that is within the Center's discretionary authority.
- c. Notify the Center of suspected violations of Proactive Policies by any Covered Individual and resolution thereof.

J. Confidentiality and Privacy.

1. Due to reporting requirements, and in consideration of any potential or ongoing safety risk, USA Gymnastics cannot guarantee confidentiality in safe sport matters. However, USA Gymnastics will treat such matters with as much confidentiality as is possible under the circumstances and with the sensitivity they deserve.
2. Information will only be shared on an as-needed basis with the concerned parties.
3. Parents/guardians of gymnasts may be notified, as necessary, of any possible health or safety risk.

Part III. USA Gymnastics' Additional Safe Sport Measures.

A. Criminal Background Screening of Individual Members.

As a condition to being granted the privilege of membership in USA Gymnastics, individuals applying for professional membership must submit to criminal background screening pursuant to USA Gymnastics' Criminal Background Screening Policy. Individuals given a "Green Light" or "meets the screening criteria" consistent with that policy fulfill the background-screening requirement for membership in USA Gymnastics. Individuals given a "Red Light" consistent with that policy means criminal history has been sourced that "does not meet the screening criteria."

USA Gymnastics will continually monitor and review the individuals who are subject to criminal background searches, with the primary goal of safeguarding gymnasts and other participants through proactive measures while conforming to legal norms and industry best practices.

B. Permanently Ineligible for Membership List.

USA Gymnastics maintains a list of individuals and clubs who are permanently ineligible for membership, available at usagym.org/ineligible. Persons and clubs who are sanctioned with a lifetime ban are restricted from involvement or association with USA Gymnastics and Member Club activities.

C. Code of Ethical Conduct.

The Code provides guidance and affirms the commitment of all members to safeguard the best interests of the sport and its athletes by acting ethically at all times.

D. Athlete Member Advisement.

Upon obtaining membership in USA Gymnastics, an enclosure is mailed with the Athlete Membership Card advising Athletes of the organization's initiatives to promote a safe environment including awareness of this Safe Sport Policy, his/her role in maintaining the Athlete's own safety, and available safe sport resources.

E. Professional Member Advisement.

Upon obtaining membership in USA Gymnastics, an enclosure is mailed with the Professional Membership Card advising the member of the organization's initiatives to promote a safe environment for gymnasts and other participants including awareness of this Safe Sport Policy, the member's obligation's in maintaining a safe environment, and available safe sport resources.

F. Member Clubs.

As a condition for the privilege of membership in USA Gymnastics as a Member Club, a club must agree to and comply with the following requirements for the entirety of the club's membership period, and a certification of compliance must be made annually.

1. Have a policy consistent with USA Gymnastics' Safe Sport Policy that affirms the club's commitment to the welfare of gymnastics participants in its club and includes, at minimum, a description of conduct that will not be tolerated, standards of behavior that promote participant welfare, and a process for receiving and handling complaints regarding conduct that violates its policy.
2. Must adopt USA Gymnastics "Proactive Policies" into the club's policies and be able to provide written documentation of compliance no later than January 1, 2018.
3. Certify that no persons permanently ineligible for USA Gymnastics membership and no persons listed on a federal or state sex-offender registry are or will be associated with the club or its activities in any way.

4. Maintain current commercial general liability insurance that includes at a minimum, participant liability and participant accident medical insurances.
5. Maintain a current Professional membership for the owner of a private gymnastics facility and/or the managing director of a public/non-profit facility.
6. Have a mission statement consistent with USA Gymnastics' mission to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of gymnastics.

G. Recommendations to Member Clubs.

USA Gymnastics strongly encourages local clubs to join with USA Gymnastics in taking affirmative steps beyond those described in Section F to promote a safe environment for all gymnastics participants by:

1. Adopting additional "Proactive Policies" to foster a safe gymnastics environment and to prevent abusive situations, and by training staff and volunteers to implement such policies;
2. Implementing a thorough hiring process including, for example, reference and criminal background checks;
3. Encouraging parents/guardians to become as active as reasonably possible in his/her child's gymnastics activities; and
4. Otherwise implementing policies and procedures to lessen the likelihood that an abusive situation could develop.

H. Event Sanctions.

As a condition for being granted a USA Gymnastics sanction for an event, the applicant must certify that no persons permanently ineligible for USA Gymnastics membership, and no persons listed on a federal or state sex-offender registry, will be associated with the event in any capacity, including, but not limited to, volunteers and meet support personnel. Sanctioned events may only be hosted by Member Clubs.

I. Advertising/Trade Shows.

As a condition to place advertising in USA Gymnastics publications, on its web site or through other USA Gymnastics media platforms/publications, or to participate in USA Gymnastics Congress Regional/National Trade Shows, advertisers, vendors and exhibitors must certify that no persons permanently ineligible for USA Gymnastics membership are or will be associated with the advertiser's gymnastics-related activities, the position, activity, or event it intends to publicize; or the vendor or exhibitor's on-site activities.

J. Hiring/Training of USA Gymnastics Staff/Volunteers.

1. USA Gymnastics staff members must complete criminal background screening consistent with USA Gymnastics' "Background Screening Policy." Individuals not given a "Green Light" consistent with that policy prior to their employment may not be hired. Individuals not given a "Green Light" on any subsequent criminal background screening may be subject to dismissal.
2. USA Gymnastics shall also check at least two (2) references for each applicant.
3. All USA Gymnastics staff members will be informed about the Safe Sport Policy, which is included as an appendix in the *Employee Policies & Procedures Handbook*, and made aware of its importance to our members and our organization.
4. The members of the USA Gymnastics Board of Directors must submit to criminal background screening consistent with the Criminal Background Screening Policy. Individuals not given a "Green Light" consistent with that policy may be subject to removal.

K. Education of the Gymnastics Community.

USA Gymnastics will provide education for members of the gymnastics community geared toward promoting a safe gymnastics environment by:

1. Requiring members to complete a designated safe sport course every two years.
2. Designating a section of its website, usagym.org/SafeSport, with educational and safe sport content that is updated as necessary;
3. Featuring articles on athlete safety online and in its magazines;
4. Conducting a live presentation at each National and Regional Congress;
5. Providing online or electronic access through the Safety/Risk Management Certification or other USA Gymnastics University courses;
6. Providing brochures and/or posters to members and Member Clubs;
7. Addressing the topic at minimum annually in designated Athlete meetings, with designated Athletes' parents, and with USA Gymnastics' staff members.
8. Including information in its publications, where appropriate, including the *Safety/Risk Management Handbook* and each discipline's *Rules and Policies*.

L. Professional Development.

Professional and Instructor members of USA Gymnastics should strive to increase their level of proficiency and skill by remaining current on safety, health and training developments relevant to the sport and by seeking advice and counsel of colleagues and experts whenever such consultation is in the best interests of the gymnast.

M. Communication.

USA Gymnastics will consistently communicate:

1. Its mission and that misconduct is inconsistent with its mission and the best interest of its participants and the sport of gymnastics.
2. Its commitment to, and working toward, a safe environment for all gymnastics participants.

N. Document Retention.

USA Gymnastics will permanently retain misconduct / grievance files and materials.

O. Policy Review.

Safe Sport policies will be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary.