

INTRODUCTION - USA GYMNASTICS PURPOSE

The purpose of the Women's Program of USA Gymnastics is to promote, serve, and administer the official gymnastics program for girls and women of all levels of ability throughout the United States. This shall be done by:

- A. Carrying out the purposes and objectives of USA Gymnastics.
- B. Providing for the expansion and improvement of gymnastics programs through the training and certification of judges and the education of qualified instructors to conduct appropriate gymnastics programs.
- C. Organizing competitions for girls and women of all ability at local, state, regional, and national events.
- D. Providing for the technical organization and development of specific guidelines, rules and policies, and providing a network of communication necessary for the implementation of these objectives.

Interpretation of this publication is the expressed duty and responsibility of the Women's Program Committee and the President of USA Gymnastics.

USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct

Members of USA Gymnastics have an ongoing, affirmative duty to promote a culture that empowers and supports athletes and focuses on USA Gymnastics' highest priority: the safety and well-being of our athletes. Every member of USA Gymnastics is responsible for ensuring an environment that makes participation in the sport a positive and rewarding experience. The USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct (the "Code") is intended to work in conjunction with the USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy, and as such sets forth USA Gymnastics and its members' commitment to act ethically in all instances. Further the Code is intended to provide guidance in situations that have potential or actual ethical implications. The effectiveness of the Code depends on a personal commitment from every member of the gymnastics community. It is expected that all Members of USA Gymnastics will implement and adhere to the Code.

This Code is divided into two sections: (1) Ethical Obligations; and (2) Resolution of Ethical Issues. The Code does not address misconduct or abusive behaviors. Instead, the *USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy* provides the definitions and mandatory reporting requirements for misconduct and abuse.

USA Gymnastics' Safe Sport Measures

Any adult under the jurisdiction of USA Gymnastics who becomes aware of an incident of child abuse or sexual misconduct involving a minor MUST immediately report the incident to law enforcement and the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

A. Criminal Background Screening of Individual Members

As a condition to being granted the privilege of membership in USA Gymnastics, individuals applying for a 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." The USA Gymnastics Criminal Background Check requirements can be reviewed [here](#).

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. Members and Adult Participants of USA Gymnastics are required to accept the requirements of and comport themselves in accordance with (a) the rules, policies, and procedures of USA Gymnastics and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee ("USOPC"); (the SafeSport Code of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement; (b) the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions; and (c) all applicable state and local laws.

C. Permanently Ineligible and/or Ineligible for Membership List

USA Gymnastics maintains a list of members and Adult Participants who are permanently ineligible and/or ineligible for membership, available [here](#). Persons who are ineligible or permanently ineligible are restricted from involvement or association with USA Gymnastics and Member Club activities. Adults who knowingly allow a person to violate a sanction or restrictive measure may be guilty of misconduct for committing abuse of process in violation of the USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy found [here](#). Member Clubs who knowingly employ or associate with an permanently ineligible and/or ineligible member will be subject to termination of their membership.

D. Restrictive Measures

USA Gymnastics maintains a separate list of members and Adult Participants who have been placed on a restrictive measure found [here](#). The Participants listed are subject to restrictive measures issued by USA Gymnastics and/or the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Restrictive measures limit a Participant's access to athletes, USA Gymnastics Member Clubs, and USA Gymnastics Members, up to and including a suspension from any contact. Members and Adult Participants cannot assist someone in violating their restrictive measure.

E. Code of Ethical Conduct

The USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct ("the Code) found [here](#) is our collective commitment to work ethically in all instances. 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.

F. 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.

G. Member Advisement

Upon obtaining membership in USA Gymnastics, an enclosure is mailed with the 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.

H. 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. Maintain compliance with educational requirements of U110: SafeSport Core Course that includes all Adult Participants that include management, coaches, adult athletes, office staff, and any person with authority over a minor athlete.
3. Must adopt USA Gymnastics "Prevention Policies" into the club's policies and be able to provide written documentation of compliance.
4. Must assign a Safety Champion.
5. 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.
6. Maintain current commercial general liability insurance that includes at a minimum, participant liability and participant accident medical insurances.
7. Maintain a current Organizational Membership for the owner of any private gymnastics facility and/or the managing director of a public/non-profit facility.
8. Have a mission statement consistent with USA Gymnastics' mission to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of gymnastics.

I. Requirements to Member Clubs

It is strongly encouraged that local clubs 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 "Prevention Policies" to foster a safe gymnastics environment and the prevention of abuse by instituting measures that minimize the opportunity for adult members to be one-on-one with minor athletes, and by training staff and volunteers to implement such policies;
2. Referencing the reporting portals for USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Center for SafeSport on either the club website, handbooks, or social media pages;
3. Implementing a thorough hiring process including, for example, reference and criminal background checks;
4. Encouraging parents/guardians to become as active as reasonably possible in his/her child's gymnastics activities;
5. Otherwise implementing policies and procedures to lessen the likelihood that an abusive situation and athlete grooming could develop.

J. 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 and/or other organizations holding a USA Gymnastics Organizational membership.

K. 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.

L. 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.

M. 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 all Adult Participants, including athletes over the age of 18 to complete the Core Safe Sport Course and subsequent annual updates, as required by the U.S. Center for SafeSport.
2. Updating the Safe Sport Policy as necessary or required by the U.S. Center for SafeSport and then communicating those changes to the general membership.
3. Making available templates for consent forms required by the Safe Sport Policy.
4. Designating a section of its website, usagym.org/SafeSport, with educational and safe sport content that is updated as necessary.
5. Featuring articles on athlete safety online;
6. Conducting live presentations at each National and Regional Congress with specific Safe Sport related topics.
7. Providing online or electronic access through the Safety/Risk Management Certification or other USA Gymnastics University courses;
8. Addressing Safe Sport related topics at a minimum on an annual basis at designated Region and State meetings, designated athlete and parent meetings, and with USA Gymnastics' staff and board members.
9. Including information in its publications, where appropriate, including the *Safety/Risk Management Handbook* and each discipline's *Rules and Policies*.
10. Offering education related to the understanding of misconduct as defined by the SafeSport Code, Prevention Policies defined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies and USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy, and other Safe Sport topics as deemed necessary. USA Gymnastics offers individualized and tailored Safe Sport Education to member clubs, as well as for Regional and/or State meetings upon request and at no charge. To find out more information, please contact safesportpolicy@usagym.org.
11. Including information in its publications, where appropriate, including the *Safety/Risk Management Handbook* and

each discipline's *Rules and Policies*.

N. Member Development

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.

O. 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.

P. Document Retention

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

Q. Policy Review

Safe Sport policies will be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary. Any updates to the Safe Sport policy can be found [here](#).