



U.S. CENTER FOR  
**SAFESPORT™**

***USA FENCING***

***MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES***

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The U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) and USA Fencing are committed to building a sport community where participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct.

#### **Authority: prevention training and policies**

Federal law authorizes the Center to address the risk of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of amateur athletes in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements. See [Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017](#).

##### Prevention Training

Federal law authorizes the Center to develop training to prevent abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, of any amateur athlete. At a minimum, USA Fencing *must offer and give this training related to the prevention of child abuse to: (1) adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors and (2) subject to parental consent, to members who are minors.*

##### Prevention Policies

Federal law also authorizes the Center to develop policies and procedures for implementation by USA Fencing to prevent abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, of any amateur athlete. As a part of these policies and procedures, USA Fencing must implement *reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete who is a minor and an adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility that is either partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs without being in an observable and interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.*

#### **Application and implementation**

The U.S. Olympic Committee and national governing bodies (collectively, "Covered Organizations"), including USA Fencing, are required to follow these Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies that have been developed by the Center. USA Fencing is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with these policies.

## TERMINOLOGY

**Covered Organizations:** The U.S. Olympic Committee and a national governing body.

**Jurisdiction:** Authority or control.

**Local Affiliated Organization (LAO):** A regional, state, or local club or organization that is directly affiliated with a NGB or that is affiliated with a NGB by its direct affiliation with a regional or state affiliate of a NGB. A LAO does not include a regional, state, or local club or organization that is only a member of a National Member Organization of a NGB.

**Minor, child or minor athlete:** An amateur athlete under 18 years of age.

**National Governing Body (NGB):** An amateur sports organization affiliated with a sport included on the program of the Olympic, Paralympic, or Pan-American Games, which is also recognized by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) pursuant to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. §§ 220501-220529. This definition shall also apply to the USOC, or other sports entity approved by the USOC, when they have assumed responsibility for the management and/or governance of a sport included on the program of the Olympic, Paralympic, or Pan-American Games.

**PART I**  
**EDUCATION & TRAINING POLICY**

**A. Adults Required to Complete Mandatory Training**

The following adults at USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs shall complete training concerning child abuse prevention:

- Adult members at USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- An adult authorized by USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- Adult staff and board members of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs.

To satisfy the training obligations, USA Fencing shall adhere to parts A.1, A.2, and B, below, of this Education & Training Policy. The Center's "Core Center for SafeSport Training" provides the required child abuse prevention training mandated by federal law.

1. Core Center for SafeSport Training

The above listed adults are required to complete training concerning child abuse prevention. No later than March 23, 2019, the above listed adults at USA Fencing who are not currently in good standing with their NGB due to failure to complete required training must complete the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Core Center for SafeSport Training (i.e., the Center's online training or the Center's approved in-person training).

- Before regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins; or
- Within the first 45 days of initial membership, or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy.

Training other than the Core Center for SafeSport Training does not satisfy this policy. USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs may provide training *in addition* to the Core Center for SafeSport Training. However, if an organization provides additional training, it shall not refer to such training as "SafeSport" Training.

2. Refresher Course(s)

A refresher course is required on an annual basis (e.g., membership year) effective the calendar year following the completion of the Core Center for SafeSport Training for each of the above listed adults at USA Fencing. Policies, procedures and/or communications to said adults concerning refresher course requirements must be updated by September 1, 2019.

## **B. Minor Athletes**

USA Fencing shall, subject to parental consent, annually offer and give training to members who are minors regarding prevention and reporting of child abuse. USA Fencing shall track:

- A description of the training(s);
- The date the training(s) was offered and given; and
- A description of how the training(s) was offered and given.

## **C. Exemptions**

Exemptions from this Education & Training Policy may be made on a case-by-case basis for victims/survivors. Requests may be made directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport, [ngbservices@safesport.org](mailto:ngbservices@safesport.org), or to USA Fencing.

The Center will work with USA Fencing regarding appropriate accommodations for persons with disabilities to satisfy the training requirements herein.

## PART II

### REQUIRED PREVENTION POLICIES

USA Fencing is required to implement the following athlete prevention policies:

- A. One-on-One Interactions, including meetings and individual training sessions: Covered Organizations are required to establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions, as set forth in federal law.
- B. Medical Treatment
- C. Locker rooms and changing areas
- D. Social media and electronic communications
- E. Local travel
- F. Team travel.

These policies shall apply to:

- 1) Adult (age 18 or older) USA Fencing members at any facility that is either partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs;
- 2) Adult USA Fencing members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors;
- 3) Adults authorized by USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor; and
- 4) Adult staff and board members of USA Fencing.

("Applicable Adults")

Minor athletes who become adult athletes

- With the exception of athletes who are members of the same team, minor Athletes who reach the age of majority (i.e. 18 years of age) must adhere to the provisions found in the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies when interacting on a regular basis with minor athletes who are 14 years of age or younger.
- Minor Athletes who reach the age of majority and then obtain a position of authority that presents a power imbalance, such as becoming a coach or official, must also comply with these prevention policies regardless of the age of the minor athletes with whom they will interact.

*U.S. Center for SafeSport and USA Fencing: Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies*

## **A. ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS**

The majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations. By reducing such interactions between children and adults, programs reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. However, one-on-one time with trusted adults is also healthy and valuable for a child. Policies concerning one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships.

### 1. Observable and Interruptible:

- One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility that is either partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs are permitted if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see 3 below) or under emergency circumstances.

### 2. Meetings

- Meetings between Applicable Adults and minor athletes at a facility partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed by, and at an interruptible distance from, another adult.
- If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office at a facility under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. If available, it will occur in an office that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.

### 3. Meetings with mental health care professionals and health care providers

If a mental health care professional and/or health care provider meets with minor athletes at a facility partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that: (1) the door remains unlocked; (2) another adult is present at the facility; (3) the other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and (4) written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the mental health care professional and/or health care provider, with a copy provided to USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be.

### 4. Individual training sessions

Individual training sessions between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted at a facility under the jurisdiction of USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. It is the responsibility of the Applicable Adult to obtain the written permission of the minor athlete's legal guardian in



advance of the individual training session **if** the individual training session will not be observable and interruptible by another adult. Such written permission for such individual training sessions must be obtained at least every six months. Parents, guardians, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe all training sessions of their related minor athletes.

## **B. MEDICAL TREATMENT**

- 1) Only Applicable Adults (as defined above) who hold a current license or certification as a healthcare provider (such as MD, DO, DC, certified athletic trainer (ATC), physical or occupational therapist (PT, OT) or massage therapist (LMT, CMT)) may provide medical treatment to USA Fencing members at events or activities conducted or sanctioned by USA Fencing or its divisions or member clubs. "Treatment" includes but is not limited to: manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, splinting, taping, massage and emergency response care.
- 2) Persons who do not meet the licensure and/or certification requirements set forth above shall not, at any time or place, provide Treatment to USA Fencing members, in connection with any competition, club, camp or training activity conducted or sanctioned by USA Fencing or its divisions or member clubs. Organizers of any such competition, club, camp or training activity, including but not limited to owners or managers of USA Fencing member clubs, shall not authorize or knowingly allow Treatments to be given, except in accordance with this Policy.
- 3) At a minimum, individuals receiving Treatment will wear athletic shorts, and females will also wear a bra or top. In all cases, individuals will be appropriately draped during any Treatment.
- 4) It is recommended that all Treatments, with the exception of rubdowns and massage (see below), be conducted in an observable and interruptible public area. When this is not possible at least one individual age 18 or older, in addition to the person administering Treatment, must be present to observe.
- 5) Any massage or rubdown of a minor athlete performed at a facility or a training or competition venue must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and must be performed with at least one other adult present to observe.
- 6) Nothing in this Policy on Medical Treatments shall prohibit minor Treatments of athletes (such as rubdown or application of band-aids) by related persons (such as a family member, coach or teammate) in exigent circumstances (such as to alleviate a muscle cramp, abrasion or blister) in a public setting when a person designated in Section 1 of this Section B is not immediately available. Any such massage must be conducted in an open area in the presence and view of other individuals age 18 or older.

## **C LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS**

### 1. Non-exclusive facility

This policy applies to all USA Fencing members, including but not limited to Applicable Adults and minor athletes, at any competition, club, camp, training or other activity conducted or sanctioned by USA Fencing or its divisions or member clubs, whether or not the facility is under the exclusive jurisdiction of USA Fencing or one of its divisions or member clubs (e.g., training, camp or competition venues), or is also used by non-fencing constituents.

### 2. Use of recording devices

Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, restrooms, changing areas, or similar spaces is prohibited. Exceptions may be made for media and championship celebrations, provided that such exceptions are approved by USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, and two or more Applicable Adults are present.

### 3. Undress

Under no circumstances shall an Applicable Adult at a Club facility under our organization's jurisdiction intentionally display his or her breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to an unrelated minor athlete.

### 4. One-on-one interactions

- Except for athletes on the same team, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area, except under emergency circumstances.
- If there are instances in which an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete may be in a single locker room or changing area alone at the same time, separate times will be designated for use by Applicable Adults, if any, to ensure an Applicable Adult is not alone with a minor athlete.

### 5. Monitoring

All USA Fencing members, clubs and divisions shall, in conducting any competition, club, camp, training or other activity subject to these policies, regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas to ensure compliance.

## **D. SOCIAL MEDIA & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

### 1. Content

All electronic communications from Applicable Adults to unrelated minor athletes, over whom they have authority, must be professional in nature.

### 2. Open and transparent

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- Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult having authority over minor athletes wishes to communicate directly with such minor athlete via electronic means (including social media), then he or she must copy another Applicable Adult or the minor's parent(s) or legal guardian on all such communications.
- If a minor athlete initiates private electronic communication with an Applicable Adult who has authority over the minor athlete, then, on any response and follow-up communication, the Applicable Adult must copy to another Applicable Adult or the minor's parent(s) or legal guardian.
- When an Applicable Adult having authority over a group of minor athletes communicates electronically to the group or any number thereof, then said Applicable Adult must copy another Applicable Adult.
- Nothing herein shall prohibit minor athletes from joining, following or "friending" the official page of USA Fencing or any affiliated organization or Applicable Adult, nor shall it prohibit or restrict any affiliated organization or Affiliated Adult from posting otherwise appropriate messages or information to the entire membership or following of the page.

3. Requests to discontinue

Any parent or legal guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that his or her minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by any organization or Applicable Adult subject to this policy. The relevant organization or Applicable Adult, as the case may be, must abide by any such request, absent emergency circumstances.

4. Monitoring

Each organization and Applicable Adult subject to these policies shall monitor his, her or its social media pages and remove any posts that violate USA Fencing's policies, practices or codes of conduct.

## **E. LOCAL TRAVEL**

Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, competition or other fencing-related activity that occurs within driving distance and does not include related overnight stay(s).

Except in an emergency, an Applicable Adult shall not travel locally, alone with an unrelated minor athlete, i.e., one for whom the adult is not a parent or legal guardian. In addition to the unrelated minor, the Applicable Adult and unrelated minor must be accompanied by at least one other minor athlete or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the unrelated minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel. The parent waiver can be in the form of text, email or written document.

- In traveling locally with one or more minor athletes, Applicable Adults shall abide by the above policies on one-on-one interactions, medical treatment, locker rooms and changing, and electronic communications.
- Applicable Adults who travel locally with unrelated minor athletes must first successfully pass the screening and training (e.g., Safe Sport) requirements required by the policies of USA Fencing.
- Parents/legal guardians must receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor athlete to travel alone with an Applicable Adult who is subject to these policies.

## **F. OVERNIGHT AND TEAM TRAVEL**

Overnight travel consists of travel to training, practice, camp, competition or other fencing-related activity that includes overnight stay(s).

Except in an emergency, an Applicable Adult shall not travel overnight, alone with an unrelated minor athlete, i.e., one for whom the adult is not a parent or legal guardian. In addition to the unrelated minor, the Applicable Adult and unrelated minor must be accompanied by at least one other minor athlete or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the unrelated minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each overnight and team travel. The parent waiver can be in the form of text, email or written document, transmitted in advance of each such overnight travel. Parents/legal guardians must receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor athlete to travel alone with an Applicable Adult who is subject to these policies.

### **1. Hotel rooms**

Applicable Adults shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping quarters with an unrelated minor athlete (unless the Applicable Adult is a parent, legal guardian, sibling, or other family member of the minor athlete).

### **2. Other interactions**

In traveling overnight with one or more minor athletes, Applicable Adults shall abide by the above policies on one-on-one interactions, medical treatment, locker rooms and changing, and electronic communications.

### **3. Club or team travel**

Applicable Adults who travel overnight with minor athletes in conjunction with a USA Fencing affiliated club, team or other organization must first successfully pass the screening and training (e.g., Safe Sport) requirements of USA Fencing and the relevant club or team.

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