



## USA Fencing Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish the United States Fencing Association's ("USFA") expectations for all those engaged in this great sport of fencing. It is a foundation intended to promote a positive environment and good sportsmanship. By practicing these shared values we can create a culture that empowers and supports all members of the fencing community.

This Code of Conduct applies to the following individuals at all times: all members of USFA, Board of Directors members, officers (including division officers), committee members, task force members, working group members, resource team members, hearing panel members, volunteers, employees of USFA, officials, athletes, coaches, contractors, and others appointed or authorized to act on behalf of the USFA (collectively, "Members").

The USFA's Codes of Conduct requires all participants in USFA activities to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As members of USFA, we all must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Specifically, compliance with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act ("the Act"), the USOPC Bylaws, all USFA policies and procedures, and state and federal laws.

As a Member of USFA, you are committed to fair competition and respect for other members, including athletes, coaches, referees, volunteers, tournament officials, spectators, and fans. You understand that sportsmanship is a key tenant of competition and will exhibit the qualities of sportsmanship at all times.

You will:

- Act in a sportsmanlike manner consistent with the spirit of fair play and responsible conduct;
- Conduct yourself in a dignified, professional manner relating to emotions, language, attitude, and actions.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all opponents, coaches, referees, officials, administrators, parents, fencers and spectators regardless of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.
- Engage in no verbal or physical threats or have any unwanted physical contact with others.

- Respect your competitors and other members of the fencing community in person or via electronic or phone communication or social media. Accordingly, you will not bully, harass or otherwise be disrespectful or disparaging to others.
- Remember that at all times you are an ambassador for the sport of fencing, whether in or out of competition.
- Report all Code of Conduct violations.
- Support clean competition, including an environment free of doping, and will follow all applicable rules related to anti-doping as established by the United States Anti-Doping Agency, the World Anti-Doping Agency and the Federation International d'Esclime.
- Abide by all applicable USA Fencing rules and regulations, including but not limited to the Athlete Handbook, and Fencing Rulebook, FenceSafe Handbook, USA Fencing MAAPP, and the US Center for SafeSport Code.
- Adhere to the rules governing fair play and competitive manipulation per the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions, and the International Paralympic Committee Code of Ethics.
- Adhere to all applicable state, federal, and foreign laws, as applicable, including those governing the possession and use of drugs and alcohol and providing of drugs to any person and alcohol to minors.
- No USFA employee, contractor, or agent of USFA shall assist a Member or former Member in obtaining a new job (except for the routine transmission of administrative and personnel files) if the individual knows that the Member or former Member violated policies or procedures of the US Center for SafeSport related to sexual misconduct or was convicted of a crime involving sexual misconduct with a minor in violation of applicable law or the policies or procedures of the US Center for SafeSport per Section 220524(a)(10) of the Act.

## **REPORTING & RESOLUTION**

A violation of this Code of Conduct may be grounds for action, which could result in sanctions up to and including termination of membership.

Code of Conduct violations must be reported promptly through our online reporting portal which can be accessed [here](#), to the Athlete Safety & Compliance Manager at [c.pachuta@usafencing.org](mailto:c.pachuta@usafencing.org), or to the Grievance and Discipline Committee at [Grievance@usafencing.org](mailto:Grievance@usafencing.org). Reporters are permitted to submit reports anonymously. All reports will be reviewed and resolved per our Complaint and Hearing Procedures which can be found [here](#). The Grievance and Discipline Committee in coordination with the USFA Senior Manager of Compliance (“Manager”) will

determine whether to resolve the matter via an informal compromise or mediation or proceed with formal disciplinary action. If an informal compromise or mediation is pursued, the Manager will investigate and provide notice of a resolution. If formal disciplinary action is pursued, the matter will be decided by a panel of disinterested members pursuant to the Complaint and Hearing Procedures. Respondents will be afforded an opportunity to be heard on the merits before the panel prior to the imposition of any sanctions. Athlete Representatives will make up 33.3% of the panel. Temporary measures, such as a temporary suspension, may be imposed as necessary for the good of the sport of fencing and the protection of USFA or its members. For questions regarding procedural review of complaints, please reach out to Athlete Safety & Compliance Manager at [c.pachuta@usafencing.org](mailto:c.pachuta@usafencing.org).

## **ANTI-RETALIATION**

It is the right and responsibility of all members to report violations or suspected violations of this Code of Conduct. All Members, good faith reporters or any person who participates or is involved in the investigation or adjudication of claims of violations (“Covered Third-Persons”) is protected under this Code of Conduct from retaliation. An individual who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith or a Covered Third-Person is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership.

No individual who in good faith reports a violation of the Codes of Conduct shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse membership consequences. “Retaliation” means any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, including removal from a training facility, reduced coaching or training, reduced meals or housing, and removal from competition, carried out against a protected individual as a result of any communication, including the filing of a formal complaint, by the protected individual relating to the allegation of physical abuse, sexual harassment, or emotional abuse with (a) the US Center for SafeSport (b) a coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official associated with the corporation (c) the Attorney General (d) a Federal or State law enforcement agency (e) the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or (f) Congress.

Retaliation may be present even where there is a finding that no violation occurred, but retaliation does not include good-faith actions lawfully pursued in response to a report of a violation. In addition, no Member nor USFA itself shall take or threaten to take any action against an athlete as a reprisal for disclosing information to or seeking assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds as outlined in the Ted Stevens Act.

A copy of the full USFA Whistleblower & Antiretaliation Policy can be found [here](#).

## **ACTING IN GOOD FAITH**

Anyone reporting a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and that prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to

be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and will be considered a Code of Conduct violation.

## RESOURCES

For information on the Code of Conduct, including any of its provisions, contact Athlete Safety and Compliance Manager at [c.pachuta@usafencing.org](mailto:c.pachuta@usafencing.org) or [EthicsCommittee@usafencing.org](mailto:EthicsCommittee@usafencing.org).

**USOPC INTEGRITY UNIT** - Through its Speak Up Policy, the USOPC Ethics and Compliance team seeks to empower athletes, USOPC employees and volunteers, NGB employees and volunteers, and other individuals within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement to raise and report their concerns.

Any individual may report concerns confidentially, or anonymously, online using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#).

### Team USA Athletes:

**ATHLETE OMBUDS:** The Athlete Ombuds Office provides free cost-free, independent, and confidential advice regarding Team USA athlete rights, grievance procedures and any other guidance pertaining to selection procedures and can assist in mediating disputes between athletes and USFA.

To contact the Athlete Ombuds Office:

Website: <https://www.teamusa.org/athlete-ombuds>

Phone: (719) 866-5000

E-mail: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

**USFA REPORTING PORTAL** - For additional resources and to access the USFA online reporting portal please visit: <https://www.usafencing.org/fencesafe-report>