



USA SOFTBALL (USAS)
501(c)(3)

2026



EDUCATE, SUPPORT, GROW, DEVELOP



SAFE SOFTBALL HANDBOOK

Safe Softball is a comprehensive program of policies and process, screening, education and training, reporting, monitoring, and enforcement designed to help participants detect and report abuse, respond to it, and prevent future occurrences.



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www.USASoftball.com/safe-softball

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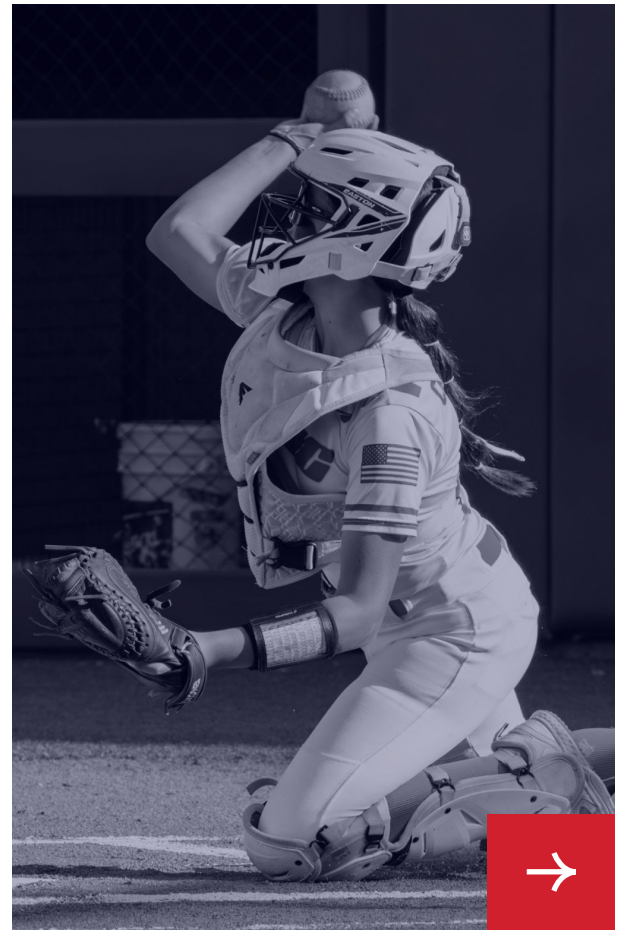
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INTRODUCTION

As the National Governing Body of softball in the United States, USA Softball (USAS) is committed to creating and upholding traditions of excellence in softball by building and maintaining a supportive and nurturing environment in which youth may grow, develop, and prosper. We join with the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) and the United States Olympic Paralympic Committee (USOPC) in its commitment to building a sport community where participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct.

**SIMPLY PUT — USA SOFTBALL
WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY ABUSE
WHETHER IT IS PHYSICAL,
MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, OR SEXUAL.**



PURPOSE

As part of this commitment, USA Softball developed Safe Softball as a foundation from which all participants in the softball community, be they athletes, coaches, umpires, administrators, or volunteers, play an active role in creating an environment free from emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.

Safe Softball is a comprehensive program of policies and process, screening, education and training, reporting, monitoring, and enforcement designed to help participants detect and report abuse, respond to it, and prevent future occurrences.

This handbook explores each of these elements in detail and documents USA Softball's policies and processes designed to implement Public Law 115-126 Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017

(the "SafeSport Act") as incorporated into the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (the "Ted Stevens Act"), as well as the mandate issued by the U.S. Center for SafeSport in its Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies.

USA Softball is committed to protecting opportunities for athletes participating in sport. USAS will continue to collaborate with various stakeholders with oversight responsibilities, e.g., IOC, IPC, USOPC, to ensure that women have a fair and safe competition environment consistent with Executive Order 14201 and the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C § 22501, et. seq.

Although immediately applicable to all USA Softball Local Associations, sanctioned events, and programs, USA Softball recognizes that social norms continue to develop, as does the legal

framework under which we operate. Accordingly, the Safe Softball Handbook will always be subject to modification, amendment, and further development by USA Softball, in its discretion.

The purpose of this Handbook is to clearly communicate the key principles of USA Softball's Safe Softball program and USA Softball's commitment to athlete safety. The Safe Softball rules and policies set forth in this Handbook, and as set forth in the Code of the

U.S. Center for SafeSport, apply to all USA Softball Participants, as defined below. A violation of the Safe Softball policies as found in this Handbook may be considered a violation of the USA Softball bylaws.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) were developed by the Center to provide a collection of proactive measures to help guide those entities that have an obligation to uphold the above noted Federal law(s). Entities with this obligation include the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), National Governing Bodies (NGB), Local Affiliated Organizations (LAO), and Paralympic Sport Organizations (PSO) within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement (each an “Organization”).

The policies set forth below are adopted by USAS and approved by the Center. Where the policy is indicated as “Mandatory,” the policy must be followed. Where the policy is indicated as “Recommended”, the policy is recommended by the Center and is considered optional for USAS and local associations and may be followed or required when it is appropriate for the situation. There may be occasions from time to time when USAS changes a policy from “Recommended” to “Mandatory.”

USAS requires these policies be adopted and followed by its local associations. Unless specifically addressed, it is implied that where USA Softball is mentioned and concerned, the policy or recommendation extends to its local associations. USAS requires employees, contractors, athletes, and members to follow the policies set forth below.



DEFINITIONS →

- **Respondent:** a participant who is alleged to have violated the Code.
- **Claimant:** the person who is alleged to have experienced conduct that constitutes a Code violation.
- **Third-Party Reporter:** reports brought by individuals other than the claimant are referred to as “third-party reports” and those bringing them are “third-party reporters.”
- **Event Personnel:** volunteers, media, vendors, medical personnel, athlete assistants, coaches, and umpires with pre-authorized event access
- **Registered Participants:** The Code applies to all individuals who participate in USA Softball. This includes a wide range of individuals who participate in softball in various capacities, including members, license holders, or employees of USA Softball or its local associations, as well as volunteers, trainers, coaches, athletes, or contracted individuals who have been “authorized, approved, or appointed by USA Softball, its local associations, or the USOPC to have regular contact with or authority over Minor Athletes. Participants also include those who are otherwise considered to be “within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Softball, its local associations, or the USOPC.”
- **Exclusion List:** list of individuals who are unable to participate in any event, program, activity, or competition authorized by, organized by, or under the auspices of USA Softball.
- **MAAPP:** Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. The USAS MAAPP is derived from the U.S. Center for SafeSport’s MAAPP.
- **Event:** includes travel, lodging, practice, competition, and health or medical treatment.
- **Regular Contact:** ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any Minor Athlete(s)
- **Authority:** When one person’s position over another person is such that, based on the totality of the circumstances, they have the power or right to direct, control, give orders to, or make decisions for that person.
- **Adult Participant:** Any adult (18 years of age or older) who is: A member or license holder of an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC; An employee or board member of an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC; Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC; Authorized, approved, or appointed by an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC to have Regular Contact with or Authority over Minor Athletes.
- **Minor Athlete:** An amateur athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or partially or fully under the jurisdiction of, an NGB, PSO, USOPC, or LAO.
- **LAO:** Local Affiliated Organization, also known as local association.

THE U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT →

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 authorizes the Center to develop training and policies to prevent abuse—including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse—within the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(1). Federal law requires that, at a minimum, national governing bodies and Paralympic sports organizations must offer and give consistent training related to the prevention of child abuse: (1) to all adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors and (2) subject to parental consent, to members who are minors. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2)(E). Federal law requires that these policies contain reasonable procedures to limit unobservable and uninterrupted one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete, who is a minor, and an adult, who is not the minor’s legal guardian, at facilities under the jurisdiction of organizations within the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2)(C).

CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

This policy constitutes the Code of Conduct of USA Softball. This Code of Conduct is intended to protect the safety and well-being of individuals who associate with USA Softball, and to ensure that all individuals who associate with USA Softball conduct themselves with integrity, maintain a high standard of ethical conduct, and promote the Olympic & Paralympic values, spirit, and ideals.

APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

This Policy applies to all USA Softball members, board members, officers, directors, committee members, task force members, employees, coaches, independent contractors, officials, and volunteers, and anyone participating in USA Softball events and activities (collectively, “Affiliated Individuals”). All such Affiliated Individuals should become familiar with the rules and standards of this Code of Conduct.



LEGAL COMPLIANCE

USA Softball requires that Affiliated Individuals follow the Code of Conduct and abide by all applicable USA Softball policies and procedures; United States federal, state and local law as applicable, including the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act; and foreign law as applicable. If an Affiliated Individual should ever encounter a conflict of law, such as a conflict between United States and foreign law, or have any questions about the legality of any action, contact USA Softball’s Chief Operating Officer for further information and guidance.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT

All Affiliated Individuals must:

- Adhere to the anti-doping rules and policies of the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee, USOPC, World Anti-Doping Agency, U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, and World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC).
- Adhere to the rules and policies of the U.S. Center for SafeSport, including, but not limited to, the SafeSport Code and the USA Softball athlete safety policy.
- Comply with the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions and/or the IPC Code of Ethics, as

applicable, and commit to promote sport free from manipulation, corrupt conduct, or using or disclosing inside information for any purpose.

- In competition, compete to the best of his or her ability while being safe and sportsmanlike.
- Respect and comply with the laws of the state and/or country in which I am training, traveling, or competing, including, but not limited to, laws governing the possession and use of drugs and alcohol, and providing of drugs to any person and of alcohol to minors.
- Be responsible for his or her own behavior and for reading, understanding, and abiding by all applicable policies, including those of USA Softball, as well as the competitions and events in which he or she participates.
- Respect and abide by all other rules, policies, and procedures of USA Softball, and of the facilities and accommodations in which he or she trains and lives at and/or uses.
- Never engage in discrimination of any kind on whatever grounds, be it race, color, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, national origin, or other status.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship by showing respect toward teammates, coaches, competitors, officials, and audience members at all events and competitions.
- Refrain from foul language, violence, and

behavior that could reasonably be deemed dishonest, offensive, intentionally malicious, or illegal.

- Respect the property of others and not vandalize, damage, or steal any such property.
- Agree to refrain from authorizing the use of photographs, films, or videos of a member in USA Softball apparel or equipment or the use of the USA Softball logo for the purpose of trade, without the prior written consent of USA Softball.
- Understand that any act, conduct, or personal appearance, even if not expressly enumerated above, that violates the spirit and intent of this Code of Conduct, or brings disrespect or dishonor to myself, my fellow athletes, USA Softball, or the United States, is a Code of Conduct violation.
- Understand that, if under the age of 18, his or her parents or legal guardians may be notified of all written reports of counseling or misconduct.
- Understand that any dispute or action arising from this Code of Conduct will be resolved through USA Softball’s Complaint Procedures.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Continued

THE CODE OF CONDUCT (cont.)

Specifically, all Board/Committee Members and USA Softball staff must:

- Function primarily on behalf of USA Softball and not on behalf of any one constituency or group.
- Respect confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of USA Softball governance documents, policies and procedures.
- Be independent and impartial and not influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward or fear of criticism.

Specifically, coaches, and those functioning as coaches, must:

- Treat all athletes with respect at all times.
- Be aware of the health and safety of all athletes at all times in regard to our sport. If the conditions are unsafe, follow best practices and not allow the health and safety of the athletes to be compromised.
- Recognize the signs of injury, physical and psychological stress in themselves and in athletes, take these indicators seriously, and refer or seek out appropriate and qualified support.
- Be prepared with an executable emergency plan for their primary use facilities that has been shared and practiced.
- Assist the athlete in forming goals and expectations that are realistic and practical with consideration of the age, resources and experience of the athlete.
- Consistently give the athletes the opportunity to develop their sport and non-sport skills translating into other facets of their lives (e.g. time management, goal setting) at a minimum of once per season.

Specifically, umpires, and those functioning as officials must:

- Maintain a current and thorough knowledge of the rules and officiating procedures of our sport and officiating procedures.
- Conduct themselves impartially, professionally and in good faith.
- Assist with the development of lesser-experienced officials as needed.
- Take ownership of actions and decisions made while [officiating].

Specifically, parents, fans, and spectators must:

- Encourage athletes to compete within the rules and to resolve conflicts positively.

- Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a competition, practice or training session.
- Respect the decisions of officials and encourage participants' continued effort.
- Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, officials, and volunteers.

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

No code of conduct can address every situation, nor can it take the place of good judgment and integrity. USA Softball maintains an "open door" for anyone who has questions or concerns. USA Softball will support all efforts to comply with this Code of Conduct.

If Affiliated Individuals need advice or assistance concerning the application of any aspect of these standards, consult your supervisor or manager, or USA Softball's Chief Operating Officer. Affiliated Individuals are expected to seek advice and clarification promptly when they are uncertain about proper actions or practices. Affiliated Individuals should be alert and sensitive to situations that could result in unethical, illegal, or improper actions. Affiliated Individuals have an obligation to report potential or actual violations of this Code of Conduct via the online Safe Softball Reporting Form.

USA Softball has zero tolerance for retaliatory conduct by any Affiliated Individual against any person who comes forward with a good faith complaint or issue. Retaliation for reporting in good faith an alleged violation of this Code of Conduct will itself constitute a violation of this Code of Conduct.

For more information about the definition of retaliation and USA Softball's zero tolerance approach to retaliation, please see the USA Softball Safe Softball Handbook.

INVESTIGATION OF POTENTIAL VIOLATIONS

USA Softball takes its obligation to investigate potential violations of the Code seriously. All properly filed complaints regarding the violation of the Code will be investigated and resolved in accordance with the USA Softball complaint procedures as outlined in the Bylaws Section 16 as published and available on USA Softball's website.

In no event shall USA Softball deny or threaten to deny an athlete, coach, official, or administrator the opportunity to participate in protected or amateur athletic competition without fair notice and an opportunity to a hearing in accordance with the requirements of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, the USOPC Bylaws and the USA Softball Complaint Procedures.

RESOURCES

Affiliated Individuals may contact USA Softball's Chief Operating Officer with questions or complaints. Athlete members also may contact the athlete representative(s) to the Board of Directors as well as the Athletes Advisory Council.

Specific to the Olympic and Paralympic Movement:

Team USA athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds for independent and confidential advice on a variety of sport related matters, including their rights, applicable rules, policies or processes, and questions related to resolving disputes and grievances. The Athlete Ombuds can also help Team USA athletes connect with legal counsel or mental health resources if needed. All other NGB athletes (i.e., athletes competing domestically at the masters or youth level, recreational athletes, foreign athletes), are welcome to visit the Athlete Ombuds website to review informational resources and should work directly with their NGB to understand additional resources and options available to them.

Contact: ombudsman@usathlete.org (www.usathlete.org)

Individuals who wish to report concerns related to this Code of Conduct as it relates to involvement in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement may also submit a report using the USOPC Integrity Portal. The Integrity Portal allows individuals to submit concerns to the USOPC confidentially and/or anonymously. Reports may be made online or by telephone.

Website: usopc.ethicspoint.com | Hotline: 877-404-9935

NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF CONTACTS

Allison Flaig, Chief Operating Officer: aflaig@usasoftball.com
Craig Cress, Chief Executive Officer: ccress@usasoftball.com

ELITE ATHLETE CONTACTS

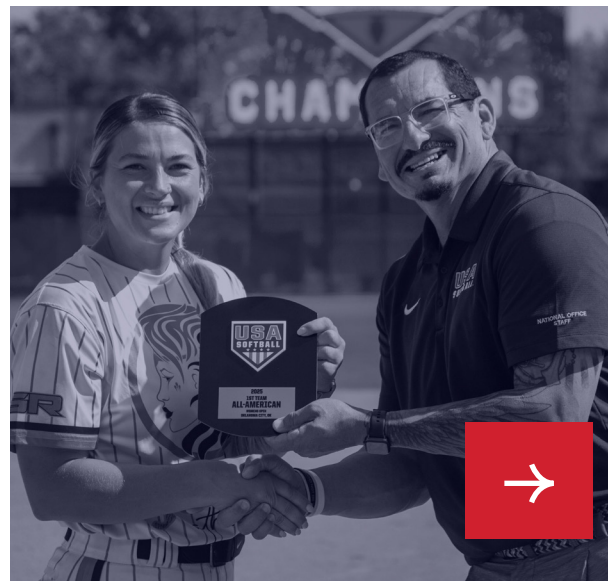
Aubree Munro: aubreearielle@gmail.com
Aubrey Leach: all10fp@sbcglobal.net

BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

PURPOSE

USA Softball is committed to the safety of athletes and participants involved in sport. USA Softball requires background checks in order to (a) foster a safe environment at all competition and training environments sanctioned and/or overseen by USA Softball; (b) create a safe living, training, and competition environment for athletes and other individuals associated with USA Softball; and (c) protect persons at risk, including, but not limited to, minors and vulnerable adults.

This policy sets forth the USA Softball's background check standards and outlines the guidelines for the use of background checks to determine eligibility for USA Softball membership and for participation in USA Softball programs and services.



APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

This policy applies to positions that require a background check be conducted prior to the applicant being eligible for such position, as outlined in the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy and USA Softball Procedural Code, which include:

- A. All USA Softball Staff;
- B. All USA Softball Council Members;
- C. All adult (as defined below) members of any USA Softball recognized national team;
- D. All adult athletes selected to participate on a national or international team, or any Delegation events to which the USOPC sends athletes;
- E. All individuals that USA Softball formally authorizes, approves or appoints to (a) serve in a position of authority over or (b) have regular contact with minor athletes. This shall include, but is not limited to, staff, officials, coaches, board members, coordinators, local affiliated administrator/directors, trainers, independent contractors, volunteers, training partners, guides and medical personnel, and other individuals authorized or nominated by USA Softball to work with athletes or other participants while at a USA Softball Training Site or competition event to which USA Softball sends athletes;
- F. All adult athletes, assistants, medical professionals, and/or personal care assistants training at Olympic and Paralympic Training

Centers [or at USA Softball-designated national training centers/venues] or in affiliation with the USAS National Teams programs (but excluding emergency/ambulatory professions); and

- G. All ACE Coaches;
- H. Other adults that may have contact with athletes, as determined by the CEO and/or governing documents.
- I. Each USA Softball Training Site shall require criminal background checks in compliance with the background search components, for those individuals it formally authorizes, approves or appoints (a) to serve in a position of authority over athletes, or (b) to have regular contact with minor athletes.
- J. Individuals affiliated with the media, who are authorized or credentialed by USA Softball to access a Training Site or attend a competition ran by USA Softball are required to undergo a criminal background check if they have unsupervised one-on-one interactions with athletes.
- K. Contracts between USA Softball and third-party vendors/contractors that are (a) in a position of authority over or (b) in regular contact with athletes must include the background check requirements set forth in this policy. The contracts shall also specify that certification must be provided by the vendor/contractor upon request by USA Softball, to establish that the mandated background checks were

conducted.

- L. When partnering with community organizations (i.e. YMCA, Boys and Girls Club) for events, USA Softball shall ensure that the partnership agreement includes language regarding background check requirements. The agreements shall also specify that certification must be provided by the community organization upon request by USA Softball, to establish that the mandated background checks were conducted.

Note: Applicability of this policy does not supersede or replace applicability to USOPC Background Check requirements or state law. Some members of USA Softball may be subject to this policy that are not subject to the USOPC policy and vice versa.

DEFINITIONS

Adult: Applies to any person eighteen (18) years of age or older.

BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

Continued

BACKGROUND CHECK SEARCH DESCRIPTION

The following search requirements could be used for any Background Check called for in this policy:

- A. Social Security Number validation (Or suitable alternative identification verification process as determined by the background check vendor.);
- B. Name and address history records;
- C. Two independent Multi-Jurisdictional Criminal Database searches covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
- D. Federal District Courts search for each name used and district where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past seven years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable;
- E. County Criminal Records for each name used and county where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past seven years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable for each county searched;
- F. National Sex Offender Registry database search of all available states, plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
- G. Multiple National Watch Lists;
- H. Multi-Jurisdictional criminal database covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico
- I. SafeSport Disciplinary Records
- J. Comprehensive International Records search for persons who have lived outside of the United States for six consecutive months in any one country, during the past seven years (International record checks vary from country to country. The background check vendor will provide comparable search components depending on the laws of that specific country.);
- K. Motor Vehicle Records of at least a 3-year history in the state of licensure; (if driving is required for position);

POLICY OUTLINE

No person may be a member of USA Softball or have contact with minor athletes if they do not

pass the applicable background check.

A background check shall be conducted prior to the commencement of a new role or competition for all applicable individuals and shall be completed no less than every year.

Background checks may be conducted more frequently as part of routine background check updates and/or if a permissible purpose (as defined by State law) has been determined.

FLAGGED OFFENSES

If a reportable record or disclosure shows a reportable disposition, or the existence of pending charges, for any of the below-described criminal offenses, the Background Check Committee shall undertake a review of such individual's application to determine whether such person should be permitted to participate in USA Softball programs ("Red Light" Finding):

- A. Any felony; and (For purposes of these procedures, the term "felony" shall refer to any criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for more than one year.);
- B. Any misdemeanor involving:
 - i. All sexual crimes, criminal offenses of a sexual nature to include but not limited to; rape, child molestation, sexual battery, lewd conduct, possession and distribution of child pornography, possession and distribution of obscene material, prostitution, indecent exposure, and public indecency;
 - ii. Any drug related offenses;
 - iii. Harm to a minor or vulnerable person, including, but not limited to, offenses such as child abandonment, child endangerment/neglect/abuse, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and DUI with a minor;
 - iv. Violence against a person, force, or threat of force (including crimes involving deadly weapons and domestic violence);
 - v. Stalking, harassment, blackmail, violation of a protection order, and/or threats;
 - vi. Destruction of property, including arson,

vandalism, and criminal mischief; and
vii. Animal abuse, cruelty, or neglect.

- C. If a reportable record or disclosure shows an applicant is currently listed on or has previously been listed on a sex offender registry, that shall also constitute a "Red Light Finding".

Note: Any person's participation in a USOPC event or competition will be subject to appropriate USOPC Background Checks and potentially to a USOPC Secondary Review of previously completed USA Softball Background Checks.

Note: Any applicant that has been convicted of, received an imposition of a deferred sentence for, or any plea of guilty or no contest for any sexual crime, criminal offense of a sexual nature, and/or is a sex offender registrant must also be reported to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

Background Check Committee's Review and Determinations

If a background check is performed and reveals a reportable disposition or pending charges of any of aforementioned offenses, then the application shall be reviewed by a subset of the members of the Background Check Committee (or such persons' designees) for an initial determination of eligibility.

During any review by the Background Check Committee's members and/or during any subsequent review by the Ethics Committee's members, such Committee members and/or the Athlete Safety and Screening Manager may request additional information from an applicant. If an applicant refuses or fails to promptly provide requested information, such individual's application for eligibility may be denied.

A initial finding of eligibility by the Background Check Committee shall conclude the Background Check Committee's evaluation process. A initial denial of eligibility by the Background Check Committee shall entitle the applicant to seek reconsideration and a second review by other members of the Background Check Committee.

BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

Continued

FLAGGED OFFENSES (cont.)

After the Background Check Committee's second review, a ruling shall be made on the eligibility disqualification or conditional status of membership or participation in USA Softball activities.

Conflicts of Interest. Should any reviews, offenses, determinations or findings involve any members of the Background Check Committee, in keeping with the Conflict of Interest Policy/Bylaws, such members of the Background Check Committee shall not be involved in the decision making and/or members of the Ethics Committee shall act in his, her or their place.

Appeal and Review of Background Committee's Determination; Mandatory Arbitration

Individuals may file an appeal of the Background Check Committee's second and final decision denying or conditioning eligibility, including a disqualification from membership as a result of a "Red Light" finding, to USA Softball's Ethics Committee. To do so, an individual is required to file such an appeal to the Ethics Committee along with all supporting documentation within 20 days of the Background Check Committee's denial by sending an appeal to safesoftball@usasoftball.

com. Any such appeal will be considered by the Ethics Committee, whose determination will determine the applicant's eligibility under this Background Check Policy.

The Ethics Committee's determination in relation to a background check finding includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Disqualification for membership;
- B. Probationary status for membership;
- C. Restrictions on membership, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Prohibition from driving vehicles (including privately owned) while conducting any membership role; and
 - ii. Prohibition from being a signing officer for USA Softball or a member non-profit organization and/or having financial oversight, including cash handling.

To the extent an applicant seeks to dispute or challenge the eligibility decision of the Ethics Committee under this Background Check Policy, the applicant shall be required to do so by filing an arbitration in accordance with Section 16.19 of USA Softball's Bylaws (which incorporated by reference herein), which arbitration shall be handled in the same matter as a person

would seek arbitration review from a Judicial Committee decision concerning eligibility under Section 16.19. The filing of such an arbitration in accordance with Section 16.19 of the USA Softball Bylaws shall be the exclusive method of challenging any eligibility decision of the Ethics Committee.

LIMITATIONS ON ACTION

Screening Reviews Conducted in Relation to Nominations: In addition to reviews above, the results of a pre-appointment review of a candidate for a governance position may be considered by the Nominations and Governance Committee at their discretion. The Committee may not reduce, limit or constrain any of the requirements in this policy.

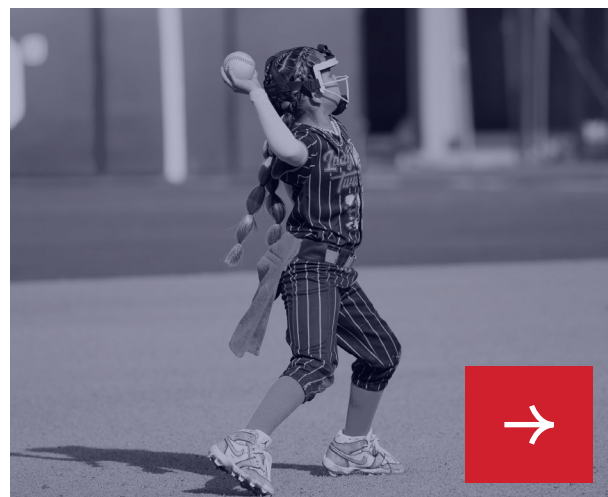
CEO Discretion in Requiring Broader Background Checks: The CEO (or the Board in a situation where the CEO is involved or conflicted) may require background check requirements beyond those mandated in this policy at his or her discretion and in conformance with state or federal law. The CEO may not reduce, limit or constrain any of the requirements in this policy.



MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

As the National Governing Body of softball in the United States, USA Softball (USAS) joins with the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) in its commitment to building a sport community where participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct. Throughout this document the most commonly used terms are defined in the Terminology section at the end of this document.



AUTHORITY

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 authorizes the Center to develop training and policies to prevent abuse—including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse—within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(1). Federal law requires that, at a minimum, national governing bodies and paralympic sports organizations must offer and give consistent training related to the prevention of child abuse: (1) to all adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors and (2) subject to parental consent, to members who are minors. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(3). Federal law requires that these policies contain reasonable procedures to limit unobservable and uninterrupted one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete, who is a minor, and an adult, who is not the minor's legal guardian, at facilities under the jurisdiction of organizations within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2). To that end, the Center has developed the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP).

APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

The MAAPP was developed by the Center in order to provide a collection of proactive measures to help guide those entities that have obligation to uphold the above noted Federal law(s). Entities with this obligation include the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), National Governing Bodies (NGB), Local

Affiliated Organizations (LAO), and Paralympic Sport Organizations (PSO) within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement (each an "Organization").

The policies set forth below are adopted by USAS and approved by the Center. Where the policy is indicated as "Mandatory," the policy must be followed. Where the policy is indicated as "Optional", the policy is recommended by the Center and is considered optional for USAS and local associations and may be followed or required when it is appropriate for the situation. There may be occasions from time to time when USAS changes a policy from "Recommended" to "Mandatory."

USAS requires these policies be adopted and followed by related LAOs, including its local associations. USAS requires employees, contractors, athletes and members to follow the policies set forth below.

WHAT IS MAAPP?

The MAAPP is a collection of proactive prevention and training policies for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. It has four primary components:

1. Organizational Requirements for Education & Training and Prevention Policies;
2. An Education & Training Policy that requires training for certain Adult Participants within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement;
3. Required Prevention Policies, focused on limiting one-on-one interactions between

Adult Participants and Minor Athletes that Organizations within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement must implement to prevent abuse;

4. Recommended Prevention Policies.

The Center developed the MAAPP to assist National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Local Affiliated Organizations (LAOs), the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), and other individuals to whom these policies apply in meeting their obligations under federal law (Note: implementing these policies does not guarantee that an organization or individual fully complies with federal law or all applicable legal obligations). These Organizations should share these policies with all Participants and with parents/guardians of minor athletes. Those implementing these policies should consider the physical and cognitive needs of all athletes.

The MAAPP focuses on just two important aspects of a much larger comprehensive abuse prevention strategy. These policies address training requirements and limiting one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. These policies are intended to be enforceable and reasonable, acknowledging, for example, that when a 17-year-old athlete turns 18, they become an adult athlete, and a complete prohibition of one-on-one interactions may not be necessary or practical. Additionally, there may be other instances when one-on-one interactions could occur, and in those cases, these policies provide strategies

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

WHAT IS MAAPP? (cont.)

...so parents/guardians can provide informed consent if they choose to allow a permitted interaction. The Center recommends that parents first complete training on abuse prevention to be informed about potential boundary violations and concerns before consenting to the interaction.

While the MAAPP will help organizations implement these policies to greatly improve minor athlete safety, in no way can they guarantee athlete safety in all circumstances, especially when the policies are not fully implemented, followed, or monitored. These policies are not comprehensive of all prevention strategies, nor are they intended to be. These policies should be implemented alongside the SafeSport Code. Additionally, other resources are available that may assist organizations in improving athlete safety.

- i. Saul, J., & Audage, N. C. (2007). Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- ii. Canadian Centre for Child Protection. (2014). Child Sexual Abuse: It Is Your Business. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Canadian Centre for Child Protection.
- iii. The Australian Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. (2017). Final Report.

HOW DOES THE CENTER ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE MAAPP?

Federal law requires the Center to conduct regular and random audits of the NGBs to ensure compliance with these policies. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2)(E). More specific organizational compliance requirements can be found in Part I. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the USOPC and each NGB, LAO, and Adult Participant to comply with the MAAPP. The aforementioned Organizations can address violations of the MAAPP by Adult Participants in their respective programs.

Adult Participants also have an independent responsibility to comply with these MAAPP provisions. Violations of these provisions can result in sanctions under the SafeSport Code.

IS THE MAAPP DIFFERENT FROM THE SAFESPORT CODE?

Yes. The SafeSport Code works alongside the MAAPP to prevent abuse. The MAAPP includes proactive prevention policies for organizations and individuals, while the SafeSport Code contains misconduct policies for individuals. However, violations of the MAAPP can violate the SafeSport Code, and violators who are also Participants can be sanctioned.

SCOPE

The MAAPP Applies to “In-Program Contact” Within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

The MAAPP, or a policy containing the minimum required components of the MAAPP, is required for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), National Governing Bodies (NGB), and Local Affiliated Organizations (LAO) within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement (each an “Organization”).

Some policies impose requirements on USAS at sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under the USAS’s jurisdiction. For example, USAS must monitor locker rooms at their facilities and sanctioned events. Other policies impose certain requirements on Adult Participants under the USAS’s jurisdiction when the Adult Participant is having “In-Program Contact.” For example, Adult Participants cannot have one-on-one meetings with a Minor Athlete unless it is observable and interruptible.

WHO IS A MINOR ATHLETE?

A Minor Athlete is an amateur athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or

partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USAS/LAO (This term shall also include any minor who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, a non-athlete role partially or fully under the jurisdiction of an NGB, USOPC, or LAO. Examples include, but are not limited to: officials, coaches, or volunteers).

Partial or Full Jurisdiction: Includes any sanctioned event (including all travel and lodging in connection with the event) by USAS/LAO, or any facility that USAS/LAO owns, leases, or rents for practice, training, or competition.

WHO IS AN ADULT PARTICIPANT?

An Adult Participant is any adult (18 years of age or older) who is:

1. A member or license holder of USAS or LAO;
2. An employee or board member of USAS or LAO;
3. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USAS or LAO;
4. Authorized, approved, or appointed by USAS or LAO to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes (This may include volunteers, medical staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, officials, adult athletes, staff, board members, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition).

WHAT IS IN-PROGRAM CONTACT?

In-Program Contact includes sanctioned events and facilities, but it also applies more broadly to sport-related interactions. The MAAPP defines “In-Program Contact” as:

Any contact (including communications, interactions, or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport.

Examples of activities related to participation in sport that could be identified as In-Program Contact include, but are not limited to:

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

WHAT IS IN-PROGRAM CONTACT? (cont.)

...competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post-game meals or outings, team travel, review of game film, team- or sport-related relationship building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community service, sport education, or competition site visits.

AM I REQUIRED TO TAKE SAFESPORT TRAINING?

Certain Adult Participants within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement who have (i) regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors, (ii) authority over amateur athletes who are minors, or (iii) are employees or board members of USAS, are required to take training. The specific training requirements can be found in Part II.

PART I: ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATION & TRAINING AND PREVENTION POLICIES

All NGBs, LAOs, and the USOPC (the "Organization") must implement proactive policies designed to prevent abuse. These organizational requirements are described below.

A. ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATION & TRAINING

1. USAS and its LAOs must track whether Adult Participants under its jurisdiction complete the required training listed in Part II.
2. USAS must, every 12 months, offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to minor athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - A. For training to minor athletes, USAS must track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to minor athletes.
 - B. USAS is not required to track individual course completions of minor athletes.

3. USAS must, every 12 months, offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - A. For training to parents, USAS must track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to parents.
 - B. USAS is not required to track individual course completions of parents.

B. REQUIRED PREVENTION POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. USAS must develop minor athlete abuse prevention policies to limit one-on-one interactions between a Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant. These policies must contain the mandatory components of the Center's model policies in Part III. These model policies cover:
 - a. Meetings
 - b. Individual training sessions
 - c. Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities and Manual Therapy
 - d. Locker rooms and changing areas
 - e. Electronic communications
 - f. Transportation
 - g. Lodging and Residential Environments
2. The policies must be approved by the Center as described in subsection (C) below. The policies may include the recommended components in Part III and the recommended policies in Part IV. Given the uniqueness of each sport, however, some recommended components or policies may not be feasible or appropriate. Such concerns should be addressed with the Center during the Policy Approval and Submission Process discussed below. USAS may choose to implement stricter standards than the model policies.
3. USAS must also require that its LAOs implement these policies within each LAO.
4. USAS/LAO must implement these policies for all In-Program Contact.
 - a. At sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under its jurisdiction,

USAS/LAO must take steps to ensure the policies are implemented and followed.

- b. For In-Program Contact that occurs outside USAS's sanctioned event or facilities, implementing these policies means:
 - i. Communicating the policies to individuals under its jurisdiction;
 - ii. Establishing a reporting mechanism for violations of the policies;
 - iii. Investigating and enforcing violations of the policies.

5. USAS/LAO must have a reporting mechanism to accept reports that an Adult Participant is violating USAS's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. USAS must appropriately investigate and resolve any reports received, unless the violation is reported to the Center and it exercises jurisdiction over the report. This requirement is in addition to requirements to report abuse under the SafeSport Code.

C. POLICY APPROVAL AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. USAS may adopt the mandatory minimum requirements of the MAAPP as-is or adapt it to fit their needs. Regardless, USAS must submit their policies to the Center at compliance@safesport.org for review and approval by April 1, 2024. The Center will approve, approve with modifications, or deny the policies. If the Center denies the proposed policy, the mandatory components of Part III of the Center's Model MAAPP become the default policy until the Center approves the policy.
2. USAS must require their LAOs to incorporate the mandatory components of Part III. USAS may require that their LAOs implement USAS's policies, which may be more stringent than the policies in Part III.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

C. POLICY APPROVAL AND SUBMISSION PROCESS (cont.)

3. The mandatory components of Part III will serve as the default policy for any Organization that fails to develop its own policy as required by this section.

Any changes made to the USAS MAAPP after the policy is approved must be submitted to the Center for approval. The previously approved MAAPP will remain in effect until written approval is provided to USAS from the Center.

PART II: EDUCATION & TRAINING POLICY

A. MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING FOR ADULT PARTICIPANTS

1. Adult Participants Required to Complete Training:

- A. The following Adult Participants must complete the SafeSport® Trained Core Course through the Center's online training:
 - i. Adult Participants who have regular contact with any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor;
 - ii. Adult Participants who have authority over any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor;
 - iii. Adult Participants who are an employee or board member of USAS/LAO.
- B. Adult Participants who are medical providers (all levels and statuses of Medical Staff/Trainers that medically assist any person in youth play or in affiliation with the USAS National Teams Programs, excluding emergency/ambulatory professions) are required to take training under Section (a) can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the SafeSport® Trained Core Course.

2. Timing of Training: Adult Participants must complete this training before regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins or within the first 45 days of either initial membership or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy, whichever comes first.
3. Refresher Training: The above-listed Adult Participants must complete a refresher course every 12 months, beginning the calendar year after completing the SafeSport® Trained Core Course. Every four years, Adult Participants will complete the SafeSport® Trained Core Course training. Medical providers can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the SafeSport® Trained Core Course and are required to take the refresher courses on an annual basis if they meet the criteria for A(1).

B. MINOR ATHLETE TRAINING MUST BE OFFERED

1. USAS and LAOs, every 12 months, must offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to minor athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
2. The Center offers youth courses, located at safesporttrained.org, that meet this requirement.

C. PARENT TRAINING MUST BE OFFERED

1. USAS and LAOs, every 12 months, must offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
2. The Center offers a parent course, located at safesporttrained.org, that meets this requirement.

D. OPTIONAL TRAINING

1. Adult Participants serving in a volunteer capacity, who will not have regular contact with or authority over any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor, should take the Center's brief Volunteer Course (or SafeSport® Trained Core Course) before engaging or interacting with any minor athlete(s).

2. USAS may provide training in addition to the SafeSport® Trained Core Course, although they cannot refer to this training as "SafeSport" training. Training other than the SafeSport Trained Core Course or Refresher does not satisfy this policy.
3. Parents of minor athletes are provided free online access to the Center's parent course and are encouraged to take the training.

E. EXEMPTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

The Center's online training courses contain information about various forms of abuse. The courses do not include graphic descriptions of abuse or show violent images or video. The content may be uncomfortable or trigger trauma for some participants.

1. Exemptions to the online training requirement may be requested by survivors of abuse and misconduct. Survivors of abuse can request an exemption by contacting USAS at safesoftball@usasoftball.com or can choose to contact the Center directly to request an exemption at exemptions@safesport.org. All exemptions granted by the Center or USAS in this category are considered indefinite and do not need to be re-requested every year.
2. Exemptions to the online training requirement for reasons other than survivor of abuse and misconduct are limited to cognitive or physical disability or language barrier. Requests for these exemptions must be made by the individual to USAS. USAS will determine whether to grant the exemption. If USAS grants the exemption, it must track the exemption to ensure it is appropriately applied to the individual's membership status. USAS must preserve documentation that the exemption was granted and for what duration.
3. The Center has several options available to assist individuals in completing the online training courses, including screen reader-compatible versions and course availability in several languages, including English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, Russian, German, and

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

E. EXEMPTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS (cont.)

...Japanese. If none of the available options will fit the individual's needs, USAS may determine whether to grant an exemption.

PART III: REQUIRED POLICIES FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

The U.S. Center for SafeSport recognizes that youth-adult relationships can be healthy and valuable for development. Policies on one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships. As child sexual abuse is often perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations, it is critical that organizations limit such interactions between youth and adults and implement programs that reduce the risk of sexual abuse.

All one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible, except in emergency circumstances or with a documented exception.

EXCEPTIONS

There are certain relationships and situations in which one-on-one interactions may be allowed or necessary. This section identifies policy exceptions for close-in-age relationships, Personal Care Assistants, dual relationships, and emergencies.

The following exceptions are applicable within all Required Prevention Policies unless otherwise noted.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. A Close-in-Age Exception: The purpose of this exception is to allow for continued relationships among athletes on the same team. This exception allows for one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete if:
 - a. The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete; and
 - b. The Adult Participant is not more than 4

years older (determined by birth date) than the Minor Athlete.

Note: This exception is different than the close-in-age exception in the SafeSport Code pertaining to misconduct.

2. Exceptions for Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants Working with a Minor Athlete: This exception exists for Adult Participants who also assist an athlete with activities of daily living and preparation for athletic participation. This exception allows for one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete if the following requirements are met:
 - a. the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent to USAS for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
 - b. the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - c. the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with USAS's screening policy.

3. Exceptions for Dual Relationships: This exception allows for one-on-one In-Program Contact when the Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete that is outside of the sport program. The exception requires written consent of the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian at least annually. The consent must identify for which Required Prevention Policies the parent/guardian is allowing the one-on-one In-Program Contact.

4. Emergency Exception: This exception applies to all Required Prevention Policies for situations where an Adult Participant must violate requirement(s) of the MAAPP due to an emergency. Adult Participants must carefully consider whether specific circumstances meet the threshold of "emergency." Adult Participants should document emergency situations in accordance with USAS's protocols. The Center recommends parents take training on

child abuse prevention before providing consent to the above exceptions. The Center offers a free Parent Course at safesporttrained.org.

MEETINGS

Sexual abuse often happens when children are alone with their abusers. This section provides policies for meetings to limit one-on-one interactions between children and adults, including mental health care professionals and licensed health care providers.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. Observable and Interruptible: Adult Participants must ensure that all In-Program meetings with Minor Athletes be observable and interruptible, unless an exception exists.
2. Meetings with licensed mental health care professionals and health care providers (other than athletic trainers; Athletic trainers who are covered under these policies must follow the "Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities" policy). If a licensed mental health care professional, licensed health care provider, or a student under the supervision of a licensed mental health care professional or licensed health care provider, meets one-on-one with a Minor Athlete at a sanctioned event or a facility, which is partially or fully under USAS/LAO's jurisdiction, the meeting must be observable and interruptible except:
 - a. If the door remains unlocked; and
 - b. Another adult is present at the facility and notified that a meeting is occurring, although the Minor Athlete's identity needs not be disclosed; and
 - c. USAS/LAO is notified that the professional or provider will be meeting with a Minor Athlete; and,
 - d. The professional or provider obtains consent consistent with applicable laws and ethical standards, which can be withdrawn at any time.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

PART III: REQUIRED POLICIES FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS (cont.)

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

Parent Training: Parents/guardians receive the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to have a meeting or training session with an Adult Participant subject to these policies.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING SESSIONS

Some abusers will single out athletes for special one-on-one instruction. This kind of isolation provides opportunities for abuse to occur. This section establishes rules for individual training sessions to protect youth athletes from uncomfortable or unsafe situations.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. **Observable and Interruptible:** Adult Participants must ensure all In-Program individual training sessions with a Minor Athlete be observable and interruptible unless an exception exists.
2. **Consent:** The Adult Participant providing the individual training session must receive advance, written consent from the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian at least annually, which can be withdrawn at any time; and
3. **Parent Observation:** Parents/guardians must be allowed to observe the individual training session.

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. **Monitoring:** If a permitted meeting or training session takes place between an Adult Participant(s) and a Minor Athlete(s) at a facility partially or fully under USAS's jurisdiction, another Adult Participant will monitor each meeting or training session. Monitoring includes reviewing the parent/guardian consent form, knowing that the meeting or training session is occurring, knowing the approximate planned duration of

the meeting or training session, and dropping in on the meeting or training session.

2. **Parent Training:** Parents/guardians receive the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to have a meeting or training session with an Adult Participant subject to these policies.

MANUAL THERAPY AND THERAPEUTIC AND RECOVERY MODALITIES

Many athletes require therapies to prevent or treat injuries. However, these treatment sessions can place children in vulnerable positions, especially if they involve physical contact with adults. This section establishes standards for therapeutic and recovery modalities and manual therapy to reduce the risk of inappropriate contact between youth and adults.

Note: Manual therapy and therapeutic and recovery modalities can be different for each sport. They can include, but are not limited to: first aid, massage, taping, cupping, stretching, cryotherapy, neuromuscular stimulations, electrical stimulation, or other modalities within the scope of a Healthcare Provider's credentials.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

Note: Only the emergency exception applies within this policy.

1. **Observable and Interruptible:** Adult Participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact during manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, and recovery modalities with Minor Athletes must be observable and interruptible.
2. **Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities Requirements:** Adult Participants must ensure all In-Program manual therapy and therapeutic and recovery modalities meet the following requirements:
 - a. Have another Adult Participant physically present for the modality or manual therapy; and
 - b. Have documented consent as explained in

subsection (4) below; and

- c. Be performed with the Minor Athlete fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin, and genitals are always covered; and
 - d. Allow parents/guardians in the room as an observer, except for competition or training venues that limit credentialing; and
 - e. The provider must narrate the steps in the modality before taking them, seeking assent of the Minor Athlete throughout the process.
3. **Consent:**
 - a. Providers of manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities or USAS, when applicable, must obtain consent at least annually from Minor Athletes' parents/guardians before providing any manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities.
 - b. Minor Athletes or their parents/guardians can withdraw consent at any time.

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. Parents/guardians receive the U.S. Center for SafeSport education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to receive a manual therapy, therapeutic modality, or recovery modality.
2. When possible, techniques should be used to reduce physical touch of Minor Athletes.
3. Only licensed providers should administer manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities.
4. Coaches, regardless of whether they are licensed massage therapists, should not massage Minor Athletes.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

PART III: REQUIRED POLICIES FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS (cont.)

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

Young athletes may be especially vulnerable to abuse in changing areas where they are undressing and possibly showering. Appropriate monitoring is necessary in these areas to prevent abuse and other inappropriate conduct. This section outlines policies for locker rooms and changing areas to ensure privacy and safety.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. Observable and Interruptible: Adult Participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact with Minor Athlete(s) in a locker room, changing area, or similar space where Minor Athlete(s) are present is observable and interruptible, unless an exception exists.
2. Conduct in Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces:
 - a. No Adult Participant or Minor Athlete can use the photographic or recording capabilities of any device in locker rooms, changing areas, or any other area designated as a place for changing clothes or undressing.
 - b. Adult Participants must not remove their clothes or behave in a manner that intentionally or recklessly exposes their breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a Minor Athlete in a locker room or changing area.
 - c. Adult Participants must not shower with Minor Athletes unless:
 - i. The Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age Exception; or
 - ii. The shower is part of a pre- or post-activity rinse while wearing swimwear.
 - d. Parents/guardians may request in writing that their Minor Athlete(s) not change or shower with Adult Participant(s) during In-Program Contact. USAS/LAO and the Adult

Participant(s) must abide by this request.

3. Media and Championship Celebrations in Locker Rooms:

USAS/LAO may permit recording or photography in locker rooms for the purpose of highlighting a sport or athletic accomplishment if:

- a. Parent/legal guardian consent has been obtained; and
- b. USAS approves the specific instance of recording or photography; and
- c. Two or more Adult Participants are present; and
- d. Everyone is fully clothed.

4. Personal Care Assistants: Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants are permitted to be with and assist Minor Athlete(s) in locker rooms, changing areas, and similar spaces where other Minor Athletes are present, if they meet the requirements detailed on page 16.

5. Availability and Monitoring of Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces:

- a. USAS/LAO must provide a private or semi-private place for Minor Athletes that need to change clothes or undress at sanctioned events or facilities partially or fully under USAS/LAO's jurisdiction.
- b. USAS/LAO must monitor the use of locker rooms, changing areas, and similar spaces to ensure compliance with these policies at sanctioned events or facilities partially or fully under USAS/LAO's jurisdiction.

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

USAS or a Local Association may include any of the following Components:

1. To minimize the risk of bullying and hazing, USAS/LAO uses locker room monitors to ensure that minor athletes are not left unsupervised in locker rooms and changing areas, including, when appropriate, Adult Participants listening-in from nearby to locker room interactions among minors.
2. Adult Participants make every effort to recognize when a minor athlete goes to the

locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, will check on the minor athlete's whereabouts.

3. We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent when other minor athletes are changing in the same locker room or changing area. If this is necessary, parents should let a coach or administrator know about this in advance.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Technology has made it easier for teams to communicate and share information. Unfortunately, it also makes it easier for abusers to contact children without supervision or share inappropriate images and video. This section sets standards for appropriate electronic communications between youth and adults.

Electronic communications include, but are not limited to: email, phone calls, videoconferencing, video coaching, texting, social media, or through any other electronic medium.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. Open and Transparent:
 - a. All one-on-one electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be Open and Transparent, unless an exception exists.
 - b. "Open and Transparent" means that the Adult Participant copies or includes the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant on every communication.
 - If a Minor Athlete communicates with the Adult Participant first, the Adult Participant must follow this policy if the Adult Participant responds.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

PART III: REQUIRED POLICIES FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS (cont.)

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS (cont.)

- c. Only platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication may be used to communicate with Minor Athletes.
2. Team Communication: When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team or any number of Minor Athletes on the team, the Adult Participant must copy or include the Minor Athletes' parents/guardians, another adult family member of the Minor Athletes, or another Adult Participant.
3. Content: All electronic communication originating from an Adult Participant(s) to a Minor Athlete(s) must be professional in nature unless an exception exists.
4. Requests to Discontinue: Parents/guardians may request in writing that USAS/LAO or an Adult Participant not contact their Minor Athlete through any form of electronic communication. USAS/LAO and the Adult Participant must abide by any request to discontinue, absent emergency circumstances.

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. Hours: Electronic communications should generally be sent only between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. local time for the location of the Minor Athlete.
2. Social Media Connections: Adult Participants, except those with a Dual Relationship or who meet the Close-in-Age Exception, are not permitted to have private social media connections with Minor Athletes and should discontinue existing social media connections with Minor Athletes.

TRANSPORTATION

Athletes are often carpooling or traveling without the supervision of their parent/guardian to practices and competitions. This can place them in vulnerable positions where they are susceptible

to abuse. This section establishes policies for adults transporting children to or from sport activities.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. Observable and Interruptible: Adult participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact during Transportation is Observable and Interruptible unless an exception exists or:
 - a. The Adult Participant has advanced, written consent to transport the Minor Athlete one-on-one, obtained at least annually from the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.
 - b. The Adult Participant is accompanied by another Adult Participant or at least two minors who are at least 8 years of age.
2. Additional Requirements for Transportation Authorized or Funded by USAS/LAO:
 - a. Written consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian is required for all transportation authorized or funded by USAS/LAO at least annually.
 - b. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. Shared or Carpool Travel Arrangement: USAS/LAO encourages parents/guardians to pick up their Minor Athlete first and drop off their Minor Athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
2. Parent Training: Parents/guardians receive the U.S. Center for SafeSport education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to travel one-on-one with an Adult Participant.

LODGING AND RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS

Youth athletes traveling overnight face greater risk of sexual abuse if they are traveling without their parent/guardian. Abusers can take advantage of

the situation by trying to have unsupervised time alone with children. This section sets rules for sleeping arrangements and room monitoring to protect athletes during overnight travel.

A. MANDATORY COMPONENTS

1. Observable and Interruptible: All In-Program Contact during lodging must be observable and interruptible unless an exception exists.
 - a. Lodging arrangements covered under this policy include, but are not limited to, hotel stays, rentals (i.e., Airbnb, VRBO, HomeToGo, etc.), and long-term residential environments, including lodging at training sites and billeting.
2. Hotel Rooms and Other Sleeping Arrangements:
 - a. An Adult Participant cannot share a hotel room or otherwise sleep in the same room with a Minor Athlete(s), unless an exception exists and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided USAS/LAO or Adult Participant with advance, written consent for each specific lodging arrangement.
 - b. Written consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian must be obtained for all In-Program lodging at least annually.
 - c. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.
3. Monitoring or Room Checks During In-Program Travel: If USAS/LAO or team performs room checks during In-Program lodging, the one-on-one interaction policy must be followed and at least two adults must be present for the room checks.
4. Additional Requirements for Lodging Authorized or Funded by USAS: Adult Participants that travel overnight with Minor Athlete(s) are assumed to have Authority over Minor Athlete(s) and thus must comply with the Education and Training policy outlined in Part II, unless the Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age exception.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

PART III: REQUIRED POLICIES FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS (cont.)

LODGING AND RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS (cont.)

B. RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. **Parent Training:** Parents/guardians receive the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for lodging arrangements under this policy.

PART IV: RECOMMENDED POLICIES FOR KEEPING YOUNG ATHLETES SAFE

A. OUT-OF-PROGRAM CONTACT

Adult Participants, who do not meet the Close-in-Age Exception nor have a Dual Relationship with a Minor Athlete, should not have out-of-program contact with Minor Athlete(s) without legal/parent guardian consent, even if the out-of-program contact is not one-on-one.

B. GIFTING

1. Adult Participants, who do not meet the Close-in-Age Exception nor have a Dual Relationship with a Minor Athlete, should not give personal gifts to Minor Athlete(s).
2. Gifts that are equally distributed to all athletes and serve a motivational or educational purpose are permitted.

C. PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO

1. Photographs or videos of athletes may only be taken in public view and must observe generally accepted standards of decency.
2. Adult Participants should not publicly share or post photos or videos of Minor Athlete(s) if the Adult Participant has not obtained the parent/guardian and Minor Athlete's consent.

TERMINOLOGY

Adult Participant: Any adult (18 years of age or older) who is:

- a. A member or license holder of USAS/LAO;
- b. An employee or board member of USAS/LAO;
- c. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USAS/LAO;
- d. Authorized, approved, or appointed by USAS/LAO to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes (This may include volunteers, medical staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, officials, adult athletes, staff, board members, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition).

Amateur Athlete: An athlete who meets the eligibility standards established by the National Governing Body for the sport in which the athlete competes.

Authority: When one person's position over another person is such that, based on the totality of the circumstances, they have the power or right to direct, control, give orders to, or make decisions for that person. Also see the Power Imbalance definition in the SafeSport Code. Note: NGBs and the USOPC must submit/include categories of members/individuals that fall under the definition, including specific volunteer designations.

Close-in-Age Exception: An exception applicable to certain policies when an Adult Participant does not have authority over a Minor Athlete and is not more than 4 years older than the Minor Athlete (e.g., a 19-year-old and a 16-year-old). Note: This exception only applies within the prevention policies and not regarding conduct defined in the SafeSport Code.

Dual Relationships: An exception applicable to

certain policies when an Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete outside of the sport program and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent at least annually authorizing the exception.

In-Program Contact: Any contact (including communications, interactions, or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport.

Examples of In-Program Contact include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post game meals or outings, team travel, review of game film, team- or sport-related relationship building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community service, sport education, or competition site visits.

Local Affiliated Organization (LAO): A state or metro local association that is directly affiliated with USAS. LAO does not include a regional, state, or local club or organization that is only a member of a National Member Organization of an NGB.

Minor Athlete: An Amateur Athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USAS/LAO (This term shall also include any minor who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, a non-athlete role partially or fully under the jurisdiction of an NGB, USOPC, or LAO. Examples include, but are not limited to: officials, coaches, or volunteers).

Partial or Full Jurisdiction: Includes any sanctioned event (including all travel and lodging in connection with the event) by USAS/LAO, or any facility that USAS/LAO owns, leases, or rents for practice, training, or competition.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES

Continued

TERMINOLOGY *(cont.)*

National Governing Body (NGB): A U.S. Olympic National Governing Body or Pan American Sport Organization recognized by the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee pursuant to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. §§ 220501, et seq. This definition shall also apply to the USOPC, or other sports entity approved by the USOPC, when they have assumed responsibility for the management or governance of a sport included on the program of the Olympic, Paralympic, or Pan-American Games.

Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant: An Adult Participant who assists a parasport athlete who requires help with activities of daily living (ADL) and preparation for athletic participation. This support can be provided by a Guide for

Blind or visually impaired athletes or can include assistance with transfer, dressing, showering, medication administration, and toileting. Personal Care Assistants are different for every athlete and should be individualized to fit their specific needs. When assisting a Minor Athlete, Adult Participant PCAs must be authorized by the athlete's parent/guardian.

Regular Contact: Ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor. Note: Please see the Adult Participants Chart at the end of this policy for a list of specific role designations.

Residential Environment: A place in which participants live or stay temporarily. Residential environments include, but are not limited to,

onsite housing at training facilities, billeting, hotel stays, or rentals (i.e., Airbnb, VRBO, HomeToGo, etc.).

Billeting: A residential environment facilitated by an Adult Participant, USAS/LAO, the USOPC, or sanctioned event staff in which a Minor Athlete is temporarily housed in a private home with an adult or family who is not related to or known by the Minor Athlete. This lodging arrangement is in conjunction with an activity related to sport.

U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC): A federally chartered nonprofit corporation that serves as the National Olympic Committee and National Paralympic Committee for the United States.

ATHLETE SAFETY POLICY

Events are sanctioned by local associations. The National Office will send a copy of the Safe Softball Handbook to Commissioners each year, who will in turn provide a copy of this Athlete Safety Policy to tournament director or event coordinator at the time an event is sanctioned.

OVERVIEW

This policy applies to all events, programs, activities, and/or competitions under the oversight of the USOPC, USAS, and/or its local associations ("LAO").

The Athlete Safety Policy for USA Softball Event Organizers outlines what steps event organizers must take to pre-authorize event access for all volunteers, media, vendors, medical personnel, athlete assistants, coaches and umpires, etc. (hereafter, "Event Personnel") and registered participants.

Event organizers are encouraged to plan ahead to make sure all "Event Personnel" whose role requires them to have regular contact or authority over athletes at a USA Softball sanctioned event, have completed the proper requirements related to USA Softball Background Screening, U.S. Center for SafeSport Training and USA Softball Membership. Additionally, Event Organizers will need to confirm all registered participants and Event Personnel are not listed on the USA Softball Exclusion List (the exclusion list includes individuals who have been banned, suspended or placed on a jurisdictional hold). USA Softball and/or the U.S. Center for SafeSport may audit any USA Softball sanctioned event at any time to verify compliance either in person or through a request for compliance information.

It is the responsibility of each USA Softball local association to distribute the SafeSoftball Handbook to every event organizer for review prior to an event. Event organizers must follow the Athlete Safety Policy to enforce all athlete safety requirements. It is all the responsibility of each USA Softball local association and event organizer to monitor and enforce the requirements set forth in this policy, which includes provisions for adhering to the USA Softball Background Screen Policy, SafeSport Code and Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (includes U.S. Center for

SafeSport training requirements), is also included in the USA Softball Event Agreement, member terms and conditions, and local association member agreements terms and conditions.

The following requirements should be adhered to at all sanctioned USA Softball events to include local, state, regional, national, and international events. Event Organizers should determine which requirements Event Personnel and registered participants will need to complete prior to the event, depending on the structure of their event and that individual's role at the event. Event Organizers should ask themselves the following questions in determining which requirements are necessary for which Event Personnel:

Does my USA Softball Sanctioned Event have minors (under age 18) competing?
Do Event Personnel have Regular Contact or authority over athletes, or will their contact be incidental and observable?

SECTION 1: EVENT ACCESS REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EVENT WITH MINORS COMPETING

REQUIREMENT: If the USA Softball Sanctioned Event will have minors competing, registered participants and Event Personnel, depending on their role, may be subject to the following

requirements. These requirements must be completed prior to start date of the event:

1. USA Softball Background Check Screening Policy
2. U.S. Center for SafeSport Training
3. USA Softball Membership

IMPLEMENTATION: Event organizers will implement requirements based on Event Personnel roles as outlined below:

The following individuals are required to complete a USA Softball Background Screening, U.S. Center for SafeSport Training and must have a current USA Softball Membership prior to serving as Event Personnel:

- Officials – USA Softball Umpire
- Staff – USA Softball Staff, Local Association Staff, Tournament Directors, or Contractual Staff
- Coaches – Any individual with a coach credential or whose purpose at the event is to coach an athlete or athletes
- Athletic Trainers – Medical staff that provide massages or athletic modalities that are not in response to an injury



ATHLETE SAFETY POLICY

Continued

SECTION 1: EVENT ACCESS REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EVENT WITH MINORS COMPETING (cont.)

IMPLEMENTATION (cont.):

Adult athletes over age 18 who are registered participants and have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors (e.g., on the same team with, practice with) at an Event where minors will be competing do not need a background check screening but do need to complete SafeSport Training and be USA Softball Members.

The following individuals are not required to complete a USA Softball Background Screening, U.S. Center for SafeSport Training (as long as contact with athletes is incidental and observable):

- Scorekeepers – Responsible for scoring management and results
- Media – Photographers, videographers and/or reporters
- Field Crew – Responsible for field set-up, maintenance and tear down
- Vendors – Businesses, sponsors or partners with an event booth
- Water Station Volunteers – Provides water bottles to event participants/staff
- Registration Volunteers – Processes athlete/event personnel check-in
- EMTs/Volunteer Medical – Provides emergency response medical support to event participants/staff

For all Event Personnel and registered participants, event organizers must:

1. Communicate to all participants the reporting protocols for all concerns regarding sexual misconduct, physical misconduct, emotional misconduct, and MAAPP violations.
2. Check individual names against the USA Softball Exclusion list, this is a list of all individuals in USA Softball who have been banned, suspended, or placed on an

Jurisdictional Hold. A list of all individuals in USA Softball who have been banned or suspended can be found on the U.S. Center for SafeSport Centralized Disciplinary Database. A list of all Jurisdictional Holds will be provided by USA Softball.

3. Provide a copy of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies via email to all registered participants and Event Personnel prior to the event. At check-in the Event Organizer should read this information to all Event Personnel. (see Section 2)
4. For any registered participant and Event Personnel listed above not required to complete U.S. Center for SafeSport Training, Event Organizer must distribute a copy of the MAAPP At-A-Glance Document (See Appendix 1) to each individual upon check-in.
5. Event Organizers must prohibit any registered participant and Event Personnel who have not completed the Center's training but is required to do so, from having regular contact and/or authority over minor athletes at all USAS sanctioned events or competitions.
6. Event Organizers must prohibit any last-minute substitutions/day-of participants who have not completed the Center's training but are required to do so, from participation or placed in a role where they do not have regular contact and/or authority over minor athletes.

SAFESPORT TRAINING VERIFICATION:

- Prior to the event, Event Organizers must verify in RegisterPlay for adult participant certificates for correct name, correct course completion, and a completion date less than 365 days from the last day of the event.
- RegisterPlay Navigation: Go to the event page under the "Check-In" tab then the "Event Compliance" tab.
- Accepted SafeSport certificates for USA Softball adult participants:
 - a. SafeSport Trained Core Course
 - b. Refresher 1: Recognizing and Reporting Misconduct

- c. Refresher 2: Preventing Misconduct
- d. Refresher 3: Creating a Positive Sport Environment

- At check-in for the event, all adult participants who successfully complete the correct course must be given a wristband to verify they are SafeSport trained.
- If an adult participant has not completed the correct course prior to the event, that individual must not be allowed to participate until the course is complete.

SECTION 2: COMMUNICATION OF THE MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE AND PREVENTION POLICY (MAAPP)

REQUIREMENT: Prior to each event, through the registration process or some other form of communication, all registered competitors and "Event Personnel" noted in Section 1, must receive a copy of the USA Softball MAAPP.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- A. Event organizers must communicate to all registered participants and "Event Personnel" that they will be required to adhere to the MAAPP for the duration of the event. This information must be communicated prior to the event. Event Organizers can send emails to registered teams using the tournament management software.
- B. Please utilize the example MAAPP Communication in the appendix for this communication.
- C. Event Organizers are also highly encouraged to post the MAAPP Communication in published event information.
- D. Event organizers will be required to provide proof of MAAPP communication to registered participants and "Event Personnel" upon request from USA Softball. Event organizers may send a separate email to Event Personnel using the same text noted above. Event organizers should keep a record of the email to Event Personnel.

ATHLETE SAFETY POLICY

Continued

SECTION 2: COMMUNICATION OF THE MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE AND PREVENTION POLICY (MAAPP)

(cont.)

IMPLEMENTATION (cont.):

- E. Event Organizers must also post information on How to Report a MAAPP violation on any door that leads to an area that is not observable and interruptible (example restrooms/locker rooms etc.). Event organizers should also conduct random checks in these areas throughout the event to ensure areas remain safe.
- F. Provide a copy of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies email and MAAPP-At-A-Glance to all Event Personnel and registered participants upon check-in if they did not receive it prior to the start of the event. At check-in the Event Organizer should read this information to all Event Personnel.

SECTION 3: USA SOFTBALL ORGANIZATION EXCLUSION LIST – VERIFICATION

REQUIREMENT: Event organizers will be required to ensure any “Event Personnel” noted in Section 1 and 5, and/or competitors, are not currently listed USA Softball Exclusion list, this is a list of all individuals in USA Softball who have been banned, suspended or placed on a Jurisdictional Hold. A list of all individuals in USA Softball who have been banned or suspended can be found on the U.S. Center for SafeSport Centralized Disciplinary Database. A list of all Jurisdictional Holds will be provided by USA Softball.

IMPLEMENTATION: Event organizers will need to manually check the final participant registration list (including last-minute/day-of participants) against the USA Softball Organization Exclusion List found on the Google Drive folder provided. Any person on this list must be prohibited from participating at all events, programs, activities, and/or competitions under the oversight of the USOPC, USAS and/or its LAOs.

SECTION 4: ADHERENCE TO THE MAAPP

REQUIREMENT: Event organizers should proactively complete a risk assessment related to the MAAPP criteria and eliminate all vulnerabilities that may exist as related to the MAAPP when the event has minors registered as competitors.

IMPLEMENTATION: Per the MAAPP, event organizers should actively complete a risk assessment prior to each event to mitigate and/or eliminate applicable risks for:

- One on One Interactions
- Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities
- Locker Rooms/Changing Areas
- Electronic Communications: Social Media/Messaging (Includes Texts and Emails)
 - No event communication should be sent to an individual minor athlete, but rather use group communications only and copy other adults, including the minor’s parents.
- Local and Team Travel

SECTION 5: EVENT ACCESS REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EVENT WITHOUT MINORS COMPETING

REQUIREMENT: If the USA Softball Sanctioned Event will not have minors competing, Event Personnel will be checked against the USA Softball’s Exclusion list and, depending on their role, may be subject to the following requirements (these requirements must be completed prior to start date of the event):

1. USA Softball Background Screening
2. USA Softball Membership

IMPLEMENTATION: Event organizers will implement requirements based on Event Personnel roles as outlined below:

The following individuals will be required to complete USA Softball Background Screening, and

have a USA Softball Membership:

- Staff – USA Softball Staff, Local Association Staff, Tournament Directors, or Contractual Staff

The following individuals are not required to complete USA Softball Background Screening (as long as contact with athletes is incidental and observable):

- Officials – USA Softball Umpire
- Coaches – Any individual with a coach credential or whose purpose at the event is to coach an athlete or athletes
- Scorekeepers – Responsible for scoring management and results
- Media – Photographers, videographers and/or reporters
- Field Crew – Responsible for field set-up, maintenance and tear down
- Vendors – Businesses, sponsors or partners with an event booth
- Water Station Volunteers – Provides water bottles to event participants/staff
- Registration Volunteers – Processes athlete/event personnel check-in
- EMTs/Volunteer Medical – Provides medical support to event participants/staff

In all instances event organizers should make sure adult participants and “Event Personnel” are not listed on the U.S. Center for SafeSport Centralized Disciplinary Database.

SECTION 6: EVENT PERSONNEL LIST

All event organizers should maintain a roster of Event Personnel and registered participants for each sanctioned event, to include their role and verification that they have each completed the necessary requirements set forth above, prior to the start date of the event.

USA Softball Event Organizers must submit an Event Personnel list to USA Softball for every sanctioned event and retain the Event Personnel list for a minimum of 5 years for purposes of USA Softball audit, upon request.

For more information on this policy, please contact SafeSoftball@usasoftball.com.

REPORTING CONCERNS



HOW TO REPORT CONCERNS

USAS provides three ways for individuals to report violations, abuse, misconduct, and concerns within the sport:

1. THE ONLINE INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

- The online Incident Reporting Form can be found on the Safe Softball page of USASoftball.com and is available for the public to use with no associated costs, fees, or other financial barriers attached to submitting a report.
- Individuals can report anonymously.

2. CONTACTING THE FOLLOWING USAS STAFF DIRECTLY:

- Jessie Undem, Athlete Safety and Screening Manager
jundem@usasoftball.com | 405.425.3459
- Allison Flaig, Chief Operating Officer
aflaig@usasoftball.com | 405.425.3430

3. INCIDENT REPORTS CAN ALSO BE MADE TO THE CENTER'S REPORTING PORTAL ([HTTP://WWW.USCENTERFORSAFESPORT.ORG/REPORT-A-CONCERN](http://WWW.USCENTERFORSAFESPORT.ORG/REPORT-A-CONCERN)).

Referral of Report to the Center: Any report received directly by USAS that falls within the Center's exclusive jurisdiction over Adult or Minor Participants of USAS (as defined by the Center) must be referred by USAS directly to the Center immediately and no later than within 24 hours.

Jurisdiction Notification: Upon receipt of complete information related to a report, USAS must promptly inform an identified reporting party of its jurisdictional determination regarding their report, communicating that the matter either is being referred to the Center, being addressed by USAS directly, or being referred to the organization that has jurisdiction over the incident.

MANDATORY REPORTING

All Adult Participants, regardless of membership with USA Softball, are required to report suspected Safe Softball violations to USA Softball. Participants are required to report suspected child abuse and/or sexual misconduct to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and local law enforcement.

All other suspected Safe Softball violations, including violations of the Athlete Protection Policies, must be reported to USA Softball (or the U.S. Center for SafeSport). There are no fees for filing a SafeSport report with the U.S. Center for SafeSport or a Safe Softball report with USA Softball.

USAS and Adult Participants of USAS follow a mandatory reporting policy requiring the following:

1. Allegations or reasonable suspicion of child abuse, including but not limited to child sexual abuse, must be reported to law enforcement immediately, and no later than within 24 hours
2. Allegations or reasonable suspicion of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct, must also be reported to the Center and USAS (after the report to law enforcement) immediately, and no later than within 24 hours.
3. Allegations of sexual misconduct, emotional abuse and/or other conduct prohibited by the Center by an Adult Participant, or by a Minor Participant against a minor, must be reported by USAS to the Center within 24 hours.

REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND CHILD ABUSE, INCLUDING SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE

The U.S. Center for SafeSport handles all reports of sexual misconduct. Make a report to the Center if you have suspicions or have heard allegations of sexual misconduct, such as child sex abuse, non-consensual sexual conduct, sexual harassment or intimate relationships involving an imbalance of power (i.e., an inappropriate relationship between a Coach and an Athlete, regardless of age).

- Go to uscenterforsafesport.org to make a report involving sexual abuse and misconduct to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.
- You may also call the U.S. Center for SafeSport at: 833.587.7233.
- Reports to the U.S. Center for SafeSport may be made anonymously.

REPORTING NON - SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, INCLUDING EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT AND VIOLATIONS OF THE MAAPP

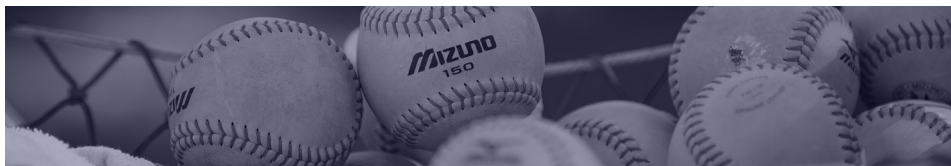
All questions or concerns regarding possible Safe Softball violations other than sexual misconduct, such as failure to comply with the policies set forth in this Handbook and other misconduct such as emotional or physical misconduct, bullying, hazing or harassment should be made directly to USA Softball.

Go to the Safe Softball page on USASoftball.com to make a report that does not involve sexual misconduct or abuse.

Reports to USA Softball's Safe Softball may also be made anonymously, but please keep in mind that at times a reporter may need to be contacted for additional information. If a report is filed anonymously, this may not be possible. USA Softball will use reasonable efforts to maintain anonymity but cannot guarantee that a report will remain anonymous. Anonymous reporting may make it more challenging for USA Softball to investigate or properly address misconduct or abuse, but USA Softball recognizes that it may be difficult for a Claimant to report an allegation otherwise. USA Softball strives to remove barriers to reporting.

Reports not under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport will first be reviewed by the USA Softball Athlete Safety Coordinator. The Athlete Safety Coordinator will determine if a Letter of Concern is appropriate. A Letter of Concern will identify the alleged infraction and will be sent to the Respondent and Local Association Commissioner with any potential imposed safety measures. The Respondent will have an opportunity to file a written response addressed to the Local Association Commissioner and National Office.

REPORTING CONCERNS



BAD-FAITH ALLEGATIONS

A report of abuse, misconduct or policy violation that is malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith is prohibited. Such reports will be considered a violation of the USA Softball Safe Softball Program and grounds for disciplinary action. Depending on the nature of the allegation, a person making a malicious, frivolous or bad-faith report may also be subject to civil or criminal proceedings.

RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION POLICY

This Policy applies to any alleged violation of the Athlete Safety Policy, MAAPP, or the SafeSport Code. The Chief Operating Officer, or designee, shall be responsible for the oversight and enforcement of these requirements.

MANDATORY REPORTING

USAS and any adult Participant is a mandatory reporter and must, upon learning of information or reasonably suspecting that a minor has suffered an incident of child abuse, including sexual abuse, report immediately and no later than within 24 hours to law enforcement, the Center, and comply with other applicable reporting requirements under Federal law, State law, and the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code.

ALLEGATIONS WITHIN USAS'S JURISDICTION

Reported allegations of abuse and misconduct that fall within USAS's jurisdiction where the Center declines jurisdiction or reported directly to USAS will be addressed and resolved as follows:

1. If the incident is reported via direct communication to USAS staff, the staff must immediately report the incident to USAS's Athlete Safety and Screening Manager and Chief Operating Officer. The Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will document the report via USAS's online Incident Reporting Form.
2. If the incident is reported via USAS's Incident Reporting Form, or once the Athlete Safety Coordinator documents the report via USAS's Incident Reporting Form, USAS will then determine if individuals involved are Adult Participants or Minor Participants as defined by the Center.
3. If the individuals involved are not affiliated with USAS, the Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will then report the incident and provide Athlete Safety Resources to the organization with whom the individuals involved are affiliated. USAS will also notify the claimant that USAS is referring the reported allegations to the affiliated organization, if applicable.
4. If the individuals involved are affiliated with USAS, USAS/LAO will assume jurisdiction and will investigate the incident. USAS/LAO will also

notify the claimant that USAS/LAO is accepting jurisdiction of the incident.

5. While the investigation is on-going, USAS/LAO may impose temporary disciplinary measures to parties involved. The decision whether to impose temporary disciplinary measures will be in USAS/LAO's sole discretion.
 6. Upon receipt of an investigative report, USAS/LAO will make a final disciplinary decision and provide all parties with a notice of final decision and any sanctions that may be imposed. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to training and education requirements, temporary or permanent suspension from USAS events and programming, and/or placement of the individual(s) on USAS's Ineligible List.
- For reports under the jurisdiction of the LAO or sent to the LAO from USAS, should follow a similar protocol as described above to respond to and resolve allegations of misconduct. The LAO must report back to USAS how the report was responded to and the outcome

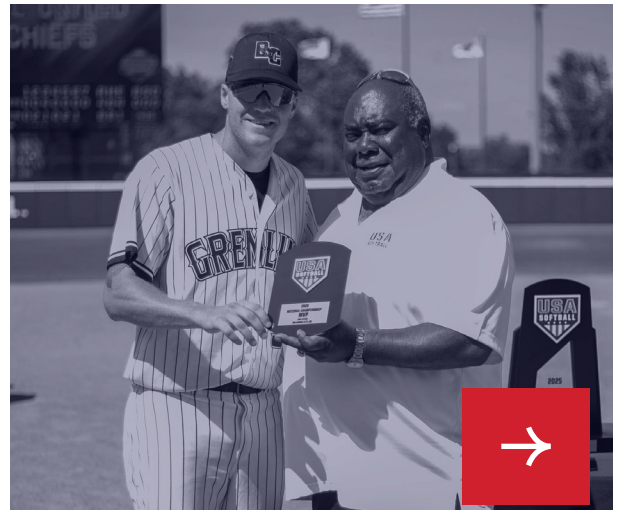
Reported allegations within USAS's jurisdiction are tracked in the USAS third party database, reflecting how allegations were responded to, and their respective outcomes, including where the Center has declined jurisdiction and where the report is with the LAO for resolution.

All other allegations within USAS's jurisdiction that do not involve violations of the SafeSport Code or

MAAPP will be resolved via the Grievance Policy, which can be found in the Safe Softball Handbook or Section 16 of the USAS Bylaws.

ALLEGATIONS WITHIN THE CENTER'S JURISDICTION

1. The Center has the exclusive jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations that an Adult Participant engaged in one or more of the following:
 - a. Sexual Misconduct, including without limitation child sexual abuse and any misconduct that is reasonably related to an underlying allegation of Sexual Misconduct;
 - b. Criminal Charges or Dispositions involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
 - c. Misconduct Related to Reporting, where the underlying allegation involves Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
 - d. Misconduct Related to Aiding and Abetting, Abuse of Process, or Retaliation, when it relates to the Center's process;
 - e. Other Inappropriate Conduct
2. The Center has discretionary jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations that an Adult Participant engaged in one or more of the following:
 - a. Non-sexual Child Abuse;
 - b. Emotional and physical misconduct, including stalking, bullying behaviors, hazing, and harassment;



RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION POLICY *Continued*

ALLEGATIONS WITHIN THE CENTER'S JURISDICTION *(cont.)*

- c. Criminal Charges or Dispositions not involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
- d. Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy or other similar Proactive Policy violations;
- e. Misconduct Related to Aiding and Abetting, Abuse of Process, or Retaliation, when it relates to the processes of the USOPC, USAS or any other organization under the Center's jurisdiction.

Reported allegations of abuse and misconduct that fall within the Center's jurisdiction will be addressed and resolved as follows:

1. If an incident is reported to USAS and the individuals involved are Adult Participants as defined by the Center, USAS will report the incident to the Center and must allow the Center to handle the investigation and make any decision on sanctions.
2. USAS will assist the Center in their investigation as requested by the Center.
3. For cases for which the Center accepts jurisdiction, USAS shall not interfere in, or attempt to influence the outcome of, the investigation.
4. USAS will also notify the claimant that USAS is referring the reported allegations to the Center.
5. If the Center receives a report and requests that USAS provide guidance on whether or not the individuals involved are Adult Participants of USAS, USAS's Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will respond to the Center within 72 hours. The Center's requests may include:
 - a. Whether the individual is an Adult Participant or Minor Participant (as defined by the Center) of USAS.
 - b. The eligibility status of an Adult Participant
 - c. The existence of any USAS-imposed temporary measures or safety plans
 - d. Any other information the Center deems necessary.

Should a report of minor athlete sexual abuse be reported to anyone within the USAS (staff, contracted staff, Board of Directors, or volunteers)

either through in-person communication, phone, text, email or any other electronic communication the following protocol should be enacted:

1. USAS's Chief Operating Officer and Athlete Safety and Screening Manager must immediately be notified and will ensure that local authorities have been contacted. If it cannot be confirmed that local authorities have been contacted, or if local authorities have not been contacted, USAS's Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will contact local authorities immediately provided there is enough information given to do so.
2. If not enough information is known to report to local authorities, USAS will provide available information to local authorities. USAS will always report to local authorities and keep all correspondence from law enforcement, even if a report cannot be accepted. If more information becomes available, USAS will update law enforcement.
3. USAS's Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will report the incident to the Center via the phone number provided by the Center's website (833-587-7233). USAS will also notify the claimant that USAS is referring the reported allegations to the Center.
4. If the report involves an individual who is affiliated with USAS but is not an Adult Participant or Minor Participant of USAS, USAS will accept jurisdiction and will investigate the incident. USAS will also notify the claimant that USAS is accepting jurisdiction of the incident.
 - a. While the investigation is on-going, USAS may impose temporary disciplinary measures to parties involved.
 - b. Upon receipt of the final report, USAS will make a disciplinary decision and provide all parties with a notice of decision and any sanctions that may be imposed. Sanctions may include training and education requirements, temporary or permanent suspension from USAS events and programming, and/or placement of the individual(s) on USAS's Ineligible List.
5. In the event the reported incident does not involve an Adult Participant or a Minor

Participant of USAS, or an individual affiliated with USAS, or a USAS minor athlete, and the softball organization with which either the participating adult or the minor athlete is associated is known, USAS's Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will notify said organization both via phone and via email of the reported incident.

- a. USAS's Athlete Safety and Screening Manager will contact local authorities immediately provided there is enough information given to do so.
- b. The report to the organization with which the individual(s) are involved should include as much known information as possible.
- c. USAS will also notify the claimant that USAS is referring the reported allegation to said organization.

ALLEGATIONS WITHIN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS' JURISDICTION

Reported allegations of abuse and misconduct that do not fall within USAS's or the Center's jurisdiction will be addressed and resolved as follows:

1. If an incident is reported to USAS and the individuals involved are not affiliated with USAS, the report will be disseminated to the relevant organization with which the respondent is affiliated, and a list of all available resources will be provided to the relevant organization.
2. USAS is not responsible for these investigations and it is up to individual organization on how they will or will not proceed with the information provided.
3. USAS will notify the claimant that the USAS is not accepting jurisdiction of the incident. USAS's Chief Operating Officer and Athlete Safety and Screening Manager are required to ensure the Response and Resolution Policy is being followed.

RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION POLICY *Continued*

FORMAL NOTICE OF INTERIM OR FINAL RESOLUTION BY USAS

If, through USAS's response and resolution process, USAS suspends, temporarily suspends, or otherwise renders an individual ineligible, USAS must notify the Center within 72 hours of the affected individual, sanction, and term of sanction. The information will be entered into the Center's Centralized Disciplinary Database (CDD).

POLICY TO ENFORCE SANCTIONS, TEMPORARY MEASURES, AND JURISDICTIONAL HOLDS ISSUED BY THE CENTER

For any notice of imposed Sanctions, Temporary Measures, or Jurisdictional Holds (a case resolution by the Center when a Respondent is not currently participating in sport, but was an active Participant at some point previously) issued by the Center, USAS:

1. Notifies all affected individuals or organizations within 72 hours.
2. Has and follows a U.S. Center for SafeSport Quality Control System that prohibits those individuals with sanctions, temporary measures, or Jurisdictional holds from participating in any event, program, activity, or competition authorized by, organized by, or under the auspices of USAS.
3. Reports to the Center immediately and no later than within 24 hours any known or suspected incident of an Adult Participant violating existing Sanctions, Temporary Measures, or Jurisdictional Holds and takes prompt and effective action to ensure enforcement.
4. Reports to the Center immediately and no later than within 24 hours any instance of "Aiding and Abetting" (as defined in the SafeSport Code) by any third parties, of any individuals under Sanctions, Temporary Measures or Jurisdictional Holds issued by the Center.
5. USAS tracks reported allegations, how reports were responded to, and outcomes where the Center has taken jurisdiction, within USAS's jurisdiction through the Center's database, and where the Center has declined jurisdiction but is within USAS's jurisdiction through a third-party database that is connected to the Reporting Form found on USAS's website.

INTERFERENCE/RESTRICTIONS/ ENFORCEMENT

USAS shall not interfere or attempt to influence the outcome of any Prohibited Conduct investigation regardless of jurisdiction.

USAS must prohibit any individual who is an employee, agent, or contractor, from assisting a member or former member in obtaining a new job (except the routine transmission of Jurisdictional and personnel files) if the individual knows that such member or former member violated the policies or procedures of the Center related to sexual misconduct or was convicted of a crime involving sexual misconduct with a minor.

If a USAS Participant is sanctioned or subject to Temporary Measures under the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy, that sanction(s) or Temporary Measure(s) must be reciprocally enforced by and between all NGBs and LAOs within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

POLICY TO SUBMIT TO THE CENTER "DATA OF MATTERS ADDRESSED BY USAS"

USAS will track via the reporting mechanism collected in a third-party database all reports made to USAS/LAO and must annually submit to the Center, using a Center-provided template, the following data:

1. For reports of emotional or physical misconduct made to USAS:
 - a. Total reported incidents of alleged emotional misconduct
 - b. Total reported incidents of alleged physical misconduct
 - c. Total number of investigations of alleged emotional and physical misconduct
 - d. Total number of violations for emotional and physical misconduct
 - e. Total number of violations for emotional and physical misconduct adjudicated by USAS's Local Affiliated Organizations ("LAO(s)").
2. For reports to USAS that an Adult Participant violated the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPPs):
 - a. Total reported incidents of alleged

- violations of the MAAPPs, by policy type
- b. Total number of investigations of alleged violations of the MAAPPs
- c. Total number of violations of the MAAPPs
- d. Total number of violations of the MAAPPs adjudicated by USAS's LAO(s)

3. For reports to the Organization that a Participant engaged in retaliation:
 - a. Total reported incidents of alleged retaliation
 - b. Total number of investigations of alleged retaliation
 - c. Total number of violations of retaliation policy
 - d. Total number of violations of retaliation policy adjudicated by USAS's LAO(s)

USOPC ATHLETE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

The USOPC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all USOPC Participants. As part of this commitment, the USOPC's Athlete Safety policy, prevention, and education efforts aim to create an environment free of Emotional, Physical and Sexual Misconduct and abuse, and to ensure effective and prompt action and resolution upon the occurrence of misconduct and/or abuse. Federal legislation and the Center both promulgate rules, policies, and procedures to protect and govern the wellbeing of athletes. As such, USA Softball will notify the USOPC's Security and Athlete Safety Office of the following:

- Any allegation of prohibited conduct that occurred at an Olympic and Paralympic Training Center (OPTC) or USOPC Delegation Event and any temporary measure(s) imposed.
- Any temporary measure(s) (imposed or removed) affecting Participants who might or will be attending a Delegation event, have access to an OPTC, or receive a benefit and/or service from the USOPC.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION & ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY



1. PURPOSE: This Whistleblower Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to support a strong culture of integrity and ethical conduct at the USA Softball by encouraging, valuing, and protecting good faith reporting by athletes, directors, officers, employees, members, committee members, task force members, hearing panel members, and volunteers (“Affiliated Individuals”) of USA Softball of any alleged violation of any applicable law or policy or any potential ethics issue.

The freedom to speak up means being able to raise concerns in whatever way is most comfortable and effective and feeling free to cooperate in investigations that follow. It also means that USA Softball has zero tolerance for retaliation of any kind against people who speak up in good faith.

2. VIOLATIONS COVERED BY THIS POLICY: This Policy is for use where there may be a violation of:

- any applicable law, rule or regulation
- any USA Softball policy
- principles of ethics
- accounting or financial practices (e.g., fraud)

If an Affiliated Individual is unsure about whether a matter might be a policy violation or is unsure about their reporting responsibility for a particular type of matter, please start by reviewing the particular policy involved. USA Softball staff should refer to the Employee Handbook or reach out to the Chief Operating Officer for more information.

Also, keep in mind that some violations must be reported. Specifically, please be familiar with the requirements in the Safe Softball Handbook. And of course, if an Affiliated

Individual suspects any criminal activity against a person or property, they should report this directly to law enforcement immediately.

Nothing in this Policy changes or replaces any mandatory reporting obligations under the SafeSport Code for the Olympic and Paralympic Movements – talk to USA Softball’s Chief Operating Officer if you have any questions about those obligations.

3. REPORTING: NO RETALIATION

USA Softball has an open-door policy and encourages Affiliated Individuals to share questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints in the way and to the people with which they are most comfortable. This means Affiliated Individuals have options for how to report any concern about a potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violation.

USA Softball has zero tolerance for retaliation against people who make good faith reports of potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations, or who cooperate with investigations of those reports. That means no Affiliated Individual may threaten, harass, discriminate against, or take any negative employment (where applicable) or participation related action (e.g., discharge, demotion, suspension, non-assignment, negative review) on that basis.

USAS will prohibit retaliation before, during, or after the process (whether led by USAS or the Center) of resolving an abuse or misconduct allegation.

Any such retaliation can be reported as described above in the same way as any other policy violation. It will be treated as a violation this Policy and USA Softball’s Code of Conduct, and may lead to serious consequences including termination of employment or participation for anyone involved in retaliation.

4. HOW TO REPORT: Affiliated Individuals may always report to an USA Softball staff member or their supervisor (if applicable). Or, the Affiliated Individual can make a report to the Chief Operating Officer. This person can also discuss the concern and help make sure it is addressed. Affiliated Individuals can also make reports to the Chair of Ethics Committee, Board member or other governance lead as designated by USA Softball.

Please remember that as a reporter, Affiliated Individuals do not need to (and should not) investigate the matter of concern or determine fault or how to fix it. The Affiliated Individual does his or her part by making it known so the right people can take action. Investigations or of reports are discussed below.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION & ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY *Continued*

4. HOW TO REPORT (cont.): ACTING IN GOOD FAITH

Just as we need to make sure that no one in our community is fearful of speaking up, we also need to make sure that no one in our community is fearful about false reports that might harm them.

With that in mind, anyone reporting a perceived ethical, policy, financial, or legal violation must be acting in good faith and have some basis for believing there may be a violation. Anyone that makes a false report knowing that it is false or that it has no basis is violating this Policy and the USA Softball Code of Conduct in the same way as someone retaliating against a good faith reporter. Such a violation may itself be reported under this Policy and it may lead to serious consequences, including termination of employment or participation.

4. INVESTIGATION: Once a report is made in one of the ways described above, the person receiving the report is responsible for getting it to the person who can best address the concern, based on the matter reported and in keeping with other appropriate policies. In all cases, USA Softball is committed to ensuring that no good faith report goes unheard or ignored.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for coordinating among these people so that reporters can be confident that reported concerns get to the people best positioned to act on them. The Chief Operating Officer will report regularly to the USA Softball Ethics Committee.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY: In many cases, a reported matter will need investigation in order to reach the right resolution. Cooperation as a reporter or otherwise may be very helpful and much appreciated. Reports will be treated as confidentially as possible; some information may have to be disclosed to certain parties in order to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law, and to provide accused individuals access to due process.

If a matter is reported anonymously and the reporter chooses to remain anonymous as it is investigated, USA Softball will respect that.

6. FOLLOW UP: If an Affiliated Individual reports an alleged violation of ethics, USA Softball policy, or applicable laws, USA Softball will report back to the Affiliated Individual on the progress and investigation results as appropriate. And of course, the Affiliated Individual is always free to follow up to

learn more from the person they reported to. Confidentiality and legal obligations may affect the details available.

For additional applicable policies, refer to the Safe Softball Handbook and/or Bylaws to review how follow ups to complaints will be handled under the auspices of the appropriate policy (Conflicts of Interest, Code of Conduct, etc) and those policies have appropriate investigation procedures and appropriate checks to ensure that conflicted individuals are not involved in the decision making process.

If the investigation of a report that was made in good faith is not to the satisfaction of the reporter, then the reporter may report that, too.

Thank you for helping to ensure that USA Softball is a safe zone for speaking up in good faith on important matters.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

16.1. DESIGNATION OF COMPLAINTS.

Subject to the Preface to Section 16 stated herein, the following kinds of complaints may be filed with USAS's National Office:

- A. **Administrative Grievance:** USAS, any member of USAS, or any member of any USAS Local Association may file a complaint pertaining to any matter within the jurisdiction of USAS, including but not limited to any alleged violation of or grievance concerning: (i) any USAS rule or regulation, (ii) any USAS program or service, (iii) any provision of USAS's Bylaws, (iv) any covered individuals defined in the Athlete Safety Policy, (v) any provision of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act relating to USAS's recognition as a National Governing Body, or (vi) any provision of the USOPC Bylaws.
- B. **Disciplinary Proceeding:** USAS, any member of USAS, or any member of any USAS Local Association may file a complaint against another member of USAS, or former member of USAS if the action occurred while the individual was a member, regarding any alleged violation of USAS's Code of Conduct, USAS's SafeSport Policy, or any other rule or regulation relating to conduct.
- C. **Right to Participate:** Any athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator or official may file a complaint pertaining to any alleged denial, or alleged threat to deny, of that individual's opportunity to participate in a USAS competition or protected competition. Any such aggrieved athlete or coach may file a protest or complaint pertaining to any such denial of that individual's opportunity to participate in a USAS National Team program.
- D. **Membership:** USAS may file a complaint against any member seeking to revoke such member's membership in USAS or such member's membership in any USAS' Local Associations.
- E. **Appeals:** Any individual subject to a decision of a hearing panel of a Local Association or the Local Association may file an appeal to the USAS Judicial Committee subject to the requirements of Section 15.17.

SECTION 16.2. AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND.

Any member of USAS and/or any member of an applicable USAS Local Association, by reason of such membership, agrees to be subject to these complaint procedures and agrees to be bound by any decision rendered pursuant to these complaint procedures, including its mandatory arbitration provisions.

SECTION 16.3. RESOLUTION PRIOR TO BRINGING COMPLAINT.

Prior to the filing of a complaint, USAS may, as appropriate, offer the respondent a proposal to resolve the matter. The respondent may accept or reject such proposal. If rejected, the respondent shall be entitled to a hearing on the merits.

SECTION 16.4. MANNER OF FILING.

The complainant shall file the complaint with the Judicial Committee, by mail, email, or lodged through the online portal to the following individuals as set forth below:

If by mail:

USA Softball, Inc.
Attn: CEO and COO
2801 NE 50th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Or if by email: Grievances@usasoftball.com
(received by Judicial Committee chair and staff delegate)

Or if lodged through the USAS online Reporting Form: [Report Online](#)

If the complainant is a minor, the complaint may be initiated by the minor's parent or legal guardian.

- A. A complaint must be in writing, be dated and signed (ink or electronic signature) by the Complainant, and contain a statement by the Complainant attesting to the truth, completeness and accuracy of the statements

made in the complaint to the best of their knowledge;

- B. Include the Complainant's full name and identifying membership information (such as Register USA number, if known, or Team Name, if applicable), unless submitted anonymously;
- C. Identify, to the extent known to the Complainant, all individuals who are allegedly responsible for the acts or omissions that are the subject of the complaint;
- D. Include a concise statement of the nature of, and facts underlying, the complaint, the individual and/or organization believed to be responsible for the acts or omissions described in the complaint, any supporting documentation and the relief requested;
- E. Attach copies of any supporting documentation; and,
- F. Demonstrate that the Complainant has exhausted any other available administrative remedies under USAS's policies and procedures.

SECTION 16.5 NO RETALIATION

Retaliation of any kind against a person or entity who files a complaint or otherwise participates in good faith in the process outlined in these Procedures is prohibited. Any such retaliation is a separate basis for a complaint and disciplinary action.



GRIEVANCE POLICY

Continued

SECTION 16.6. FILING FEE.

A complaint filed by an individual shall be accompanied by a \$300.00 filing fee. A complaint filed by an organization shall be accompanied by a \$500.00 filing fee. Complaints involving reports of athlete safety violations do not require a filing fee. The complainant may request that the filing fee be reduced or waived for reasons of significant financial hardship. If such a request is made, the hearing panel appointed by the Chair of the Judicial Committee, or his/her designee, shall determine whether or not to reduce or waive the filing fee. If USAS brings a complaint, it is not required to pay a filing fee.

SECTION 16.7. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

A complaint filed under this Section shall be filed within one hundred and eighty (180) days (i) of the occurrence of the alleged violation, grievance, denial or threat to deny of opportunity to participate or (ii) of date the injured party first learns, or by which such person reasonably should have learned, of the facts and circumstances giving rise to the cause of action. There shall be no time bar for actions regarding athlete safety or SafeSport proceedings.

SECTION 16.8. DOPING DECISIONS.

A decision concerning a doping violation adjudicated by the independent anti-doping organization designated by the USOPC to serve as the U.S. National Anti-Doping Organization (currently the United States Anti-Doping Agency) shall not be reviewable through, or the subject of, these complaint procedures.

SECTION 16.9. U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT DECISIONS.

These Procedures do not apply to alleged violations of USAS's Safe Softball Handbook or to any matter within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the "Center"). If a complaint alleges both violations of USAS's Safe Softball Handbook and an administrative matter or Code of Conduct matter referenced above, then

the allegations will be resolved through USAS's Safe Softball process. A complaint submitted under these Procedures arising out of conduct or a matter over which USAS has jurisdiction or the Center has exclusive jurisdiction, or over which the Center has exercised jurisdiction, may be stayed pending the outcome of the Center's or USAS's Safe Softball process.

SECTION 16.10. FIELD OF PLAY DECISIONS.

The final decision of an umpire or referee during a competition regarding a field of play decision (a matter set forth in the rules of the competition to be within the discretion of the umpire or official) shall not be reviewable through, or the subject of these complaint procedures unless the decision is: (i) outside the authority of the umpire or official to make, or (ii) the product of fraud, corruption, partiality or other misconduct of the referee. For purposes of this Section, the terms "umpire and official" shall include any individual with discretion to make field of play decisions.

SECTION 16.11. ADMINISTRATION.

The Judicial Committee shall generally administer and oversee all administrative grievances and the right to participate in matters filed with USAS. The Judicial Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that all complaints are heard in a timely, fair and impartial manner. Respondents shall be afforded basic due process protections, which includes respondent(s) in a grievance proceeding are provided notice of proposed action, charges, or alleged violation in writing with the supporting documentation filed by the filing party, and the consequences or remedy requested if found to be violated. All complaint procedures shall comply with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.

Within fourteen (14) days after receipt of a complaint, such time extended as needed for a possible informal resolution as set forth below, USAS will determine the following:

- A. Whether the complaint complies with these bylaws, including whether the complaint is time-barred or whether the Complainant has standing to file the complaint;
- B. Whether the underlying facts and circumstances referenced in the complaint give rise to an issue that is appropriate for resolution under these bylaws; and
- C. Whether the complaint involves matters over which USAS does not have the authority or ability to remedy.

If there is a deficiency or deficiencies in the submission that can be cured, USAS will provide the Complainant with notice of the defect(s) and a reasonable period of time to cure such defect(s). If the Complainant fails to cure within the time period provided, USAS may find a complaint is deficient under this section and dismiss complaint. There is no appeal from such dismissal. The Complainant and any other party who has been given notice of the complaint will be advised of such dismissal.

If USAS determines that the complaint does not satisfy the criteria specified herein, then the complaint will be dismissed. The Complainant will be advised of any such dismissal and the reason(s) for such dismissal. There is no appeal from this dismissal however, the Complainant may refile.

If USAS determines that the complaint does satisfy the criteria specified herein, then it will send by regular mail or transmit by email within fourteen (14) days (i) a copy of the complaint and any attachments to any individual and organization whose conduct is the subject of the complaint (an "Adverse Party") and (ii) a Notice to Adverse Party, which will advise the Adverse Party of its right to respond in writing to the complaint within fourteen (14) days of the date of the Notice to Adverse Party. This provision is satisfied by sending a copy of the complaint and the Notice of Adverse Party to the e-mail and mailing address

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Continued

SECTION 16.11. ADMINISTRATION. (cont.)
of each Adverse Party listed in the Adverse Party's membership records. This formal Notice to Adverse Party and right to respond in writing is waived in the event both parties have agreed to engage in informal resolution efforts. USAS shall provide to Complainant a copy of the Adverse Party's written response, if any.

SECTION 16.12 INFORMAL RESOLUTION

Upon the receipt of a complaint, USAS CEO or designee (e.g. COO or legal counsel) will review the complaint to determine whether the complaint meets the requirements of Section 16.1 and 16.4. If USAS determines that the complaint meets those threshold requirements and could be resolved informally, the parties will be afforded notice of this option by email, mail or by telephone. The parties also will be informed that each has the right to be represented by counsel. If the parties agree to proceed, they shall sign a statement to that effect. USAS shall seek the written response to the complaint from the Adverse Party, and allow the submission of any additional documents, testimony, and information from the parties as to the allegations contained in the complaint. The parties will cooperate with USAS in providing such documents, testimony, and information and in exploring resolution of the complaint.

If the dispute is not settled to the Complainant's satisfaction, the matter will proceed as set forth hereinbelow to the Hearing Panel for consideration by USAS's submission of a Notice of Complaint Following Terminated Informal Resolution. USAS shall offer the parties the opportunity to supplement the record with any additional statements, documents, or information to support their respective positions within a reasonable time period before forwarding the case record to the Hearing Panel.

SECTION 16.13. HEARING PANEL.

Within fourteen (14) days after the receipt and service on Complainant of the Adverse Party's response to the complaint or Notice of Complaint Following Terminated Informal Resolution, the chair of the Judicial Committee, or his/her

designee, shall appoint a hearing panel consisting of three (3) disinterested individuals to hear the complaint. The chair of the Judicial Committee, or his/her designee, shall also appoint a chair of the hearing panel from the three disinterested individuals selected. Judicial Committee members may be appointed to and serve on the hearing panel. Other disinterested individuals identified by the Judicial Committee may also be appointed to serve on the hearing panel. At least one (1) member of the hearing panel shall be an athlete. Members of the panel need not be members of USAS or involved in the sport of softball. If the chair of the Judicial Committee is not able to fulfill his or her responsibility, he or she shall appoint a member of the Judicial Committee as designee.

Each member shall read the USAS Conflicts of Interest Policy and complete the Disclosure Form. If there are no conflicts, the Judicial Committee chair will make the appointments then disclose the names of the hearing panelists to the Complainant, the Adverse Parties, and USAS. Any actual or potential conflicts of interest involving the members of the Hearing Panel will be addressed per USAS's Conflict of Interest Policy.

After the time for responding to the complaint has expired, or after receipt of responses from all Adverse Parties, whichever is sooner, the Hearing Panel may decide to dismiss the complaint on such grounds as it deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, the time limitation period has expired, the complaint is moot, the complaint fails to identify all necessary parties, the complaint does not comply with these procedures, the panel is without jurisdiction to hear the complaint, or the panel is without authority to grant the requested relief. There is no appeal from a dismissal by the Hearing Panel however, Complainant may refile.

If the Adverse Party fails to file a reply to the complaint within the time period set forth herein, the Hearing Panel may enter default against the Adverse Party. For good cause shown, a default may be set aside by the Chair of the Hearing

Panel, and an Adverse Party may be permitted to file a reply prior to a decision being rendered by the Hearing Panel.

SECTION 16.14. CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDING.

The hearing panel shall rule on all motions and other matters raised in the proceedings. If the complaint is not dismissed, the hearing panel shall hold a hearing within a time period not to exceed 90 days after the last filing. The hearing shall be informal, except that testimony shall be taken under oath.

The hearing may be conducted by teleconference as determined by the hearing panel. Each party shall have the right to appear personally or through a legal representative. All parties shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present and examine evidence, cross-examine witnesses and to present argument. Members of the hearing panel shall have the right to question witnesses or the parties at any time.

Any party may have a record made of the hearing. A court reporter may be present at the hearing at the request of a party. However, a hearing held on an expedited basis shall not be delayed on account of the unavailability of a court reporter. The court reporter shall be paid for by the party requesting the court reporter, or if mutually agreed, the cost may be equally divided. Any transcript shall be paid for by the party requesting the transcript. Transcripts shall be made available to the hearing panel at no cost to the hearing panel.

At least five (5) days before the hearing, each party must disclose to the Hearing Panel and all other parties the names of any witnesses who the party may call at the hearing and all evidence that the party may submit during the hearing. The rules of evidence generally do not apply to proceedings before the Hearing Panel. If a party believes that proffered evidence should not be admitted, then the Hearing Panel will decide that party's objection, taking into account all relevant information including the probative value of the proffered evidence. Hearsay is admissible,

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Continued

SECTION 16.14. CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDING. (cont.)

subject to the discretion of the Hearing Panel. Prior or subsequent conduct of a party may be considered in determining pattern, knowledge, intent, motive or absence of mistake. The Hearing Panel may consider whether one party intentionally concealed or destroyed evidence. If the Hearing Panel decides that a party did do so, then it may decide that the evidence would have been unfavorable to that party. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to an allegation of unethical conduct.

SECTION 16.15. EXPEDITED PROCEDURES.

Upon the request of a party, and provided that it is necessary to expedite the proceeding in order to resolve a matter relating to a competition that is so scheduled that compliance with regular procedures would not be likely to produce a sufficiently early decision to do justice to the affected parties, the chair of the Judicial Committee, or his/her designee, is authorized to order that the complaint be heard and decided within forty-eight (48) hours of the filing of the complaint. In such a case, the hearing panel is authorized to hear and decide the complaint pursuant to such procedures as are necessary, but fair to the parties involved.

SECTION 16.16. COMPLAINTS INVOLVING SELECTION TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMPETITION.

Where a complaint is filed involving selection of an individual or team to participate in a competition, or the participation of an individual or team in a competition, the complainant shall include with the complaint a list of all other individuals or teams, together with their contact information, that may be adversely affected by a decision rendered on the complaint. The adverse party to the complaint shall also submit a list of individuals or teams, together with their contact information, that may be adversely affected by a decision rendered on the complaint. The hearing panel shall determine those individuals or teams who must receive notice of the complaint.

USAS shall then be responsible for providing appropriate notice to these individuals or teams. Any individual or team so notified shall have the option to participate in the proceeding as a party. If an individual or team is notified of the complaint, then that individual or team shall be bound by the decision of the hearing panel even though the individual or team chose not to participate as a party.

SECTION 16.17. INTERIM MEASURES.

In disciplinary, athlete safety or SafeSport matters, prior to the matter being heard on the merits, it may be necessary to implement interim measures against the respondent in the following circumstances: (i) to ensure the safety or well-being of others, or (ii) where an allegation is sufficiently serious. Where either such circumstance exists, the Chief Executive Officer of USAS, or his or her officer's designee, may immediately implement interim measures to protect others, provided the respondent is afforded an opportunity for a provisional hearing within three (3) business days of implementation of the interim measure except in right to participate matters in which expedited procedures pursuant to Section 16.13 are requested. The provisional hearing is not a full hearing on the merits. The sole issue before the hearing panel is whether there is probable cause to impose an interim measure. Interim measures may include, but are not limited to altering training schedules, providing chaperones, limiting contact, removal from the venue and suspensions.

SECTION 16.18. DECISION.

A decision shall be determined by a majority of the hearing panel. The hearing panel's decision shall be in writing and distributed to the parties within fourteen (14) days after the conclusion of the hearing.

SECTION 16.19. ARBITRATION.

Subject to the requirements herein, any party may appeal to the decision of a hearing panel of the USAS Judicial Committee. USAS will submit to binding arbitration in any controversy involving its certification as a national governing body, upon demand of the USOPC; and the opportunity

of any amateur athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official to participate in amateur athletic competition, upon demand of the USOPC or any aggrieved amateur athlete, coach, training, administrator, or official. Such arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with the standard commercial arbitration rules of an established major national provider of arbitration and mediation services based in the United States and designated by the USOPC with the concurrence of the USOPC Team USA AC and the National Governing Bodies Council.

SECTION 16.20 ATHLETE OMBUDSMAN

Team USA athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds for independent and confidential advice on a variety of sport related matters, including their rights, applicable rules, policies or processes, and questions related to resolving disputes and grievances. The Athlete Ombuds can also help Team USA athletes connect with legal counsel or mental health resources if needed. All other NGB athletes (i.e., athletes competing domestically at the masters or youth level, recreational athletes, foreign athletes), are welcome to visit the Athlete Ombuds website to review informational resources and should work directly with their NGB to understand additional resources and options available to them.

EMAIL: ombudsman@usathlete.org

WEBSITE: www.usathlete.org

Individuals who wish to report concerns related to this Code of Conduct as it relates to involvement in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement may also submit a report using the USOPC Integrity Portal. The Integrity Portal allows individuals to submit concerns to the USOPC confidentially and/or anonymously. Reports may be made online or by telephone.

Website: usopc.ethicspoint.com

Hotline: 877-404-9935

KNOW YOUR ROLE

WHAT IS KNOW YOUR ROLE™?

Over the past decade or so, the steady decline of officials and participants involved in youth sports has increased at a staggering rate. The problem has gotten so bad, that several areas and sports have had to limit the number of teams, games, and sporting events they are able to offer. In 2016, the Southern Oregon Sports Commission decided to take a stand against the problem. With the help of local commissioners, including Matt Sayers (Athletic Director of Southern Oregon University), the phrase Know Your Role™ was coined, and development began on a marketing and media campaign that not only draws attention to the problem of poor participant behavior around athletics, but that also aims to change that culture for the better.

WHY KNOW YOUR ROLE™ WAS DEVELOPED

The Know Your Role™ campaign is a marketing campaign created and developed by the Southern Oregon Sports Commission. The campaign addresses the epidemic of poor behavior toward sports officials and aims to correct said problem through a series of positive messages and continued reminders that participant safety, enjoyment, growth, and development are the most important aspects of sports.

KNOW YOUR ROLE™ ROOTS IN SOUTHERN OREGON

After developing much of the Know Your Role™ campaign, SOSC felt it was only appropriate to

launch the campaign first in our own back yard. School districts, parks and recreation facilities and several other local entities throughout the Rogue Valley and Southern Oregon began to implement the program. With the help of local news and media stations, SOSC was able to not only spread the message of KYR, but also see the message be openly and widely accepted but the communities in the region.

GROWTH OF KNOW YOUR ROLE™

Since 2022, SOSC has shifted its attention and efforts to spreading the message of Know Your Role™ across the nation. In the first 6 months of pushing the message outside of the state of Oregon, SOSC has presented the campaign to several state and national governing bodies. These entities, including USA Softball, have shown great interest in partnering with SOSC to spread the message. Interest was so great, that SOSC has created a licensing package that allows organizations and entities, like USA Softball, to use Know Your Role™ to drastically improve the behavioral landscape around youth sports across the nation.

KYR LICENSING INFO

The Southern Oregon Sports Commission offers the campaign as part of a three-year licensing agreement, which comes with all of the electronic media files, templates, videos and all other digital assets an organization or group might

need to spread this message to its members. In addition, the Know Your Role™ campaign comes with a step-by-step “Game Plan” instructing organizations how to best implement the campaign, how to take advantage of their local assets, leverage local partnerships, and even how often to post the provided content to their social media platforms.

KYR VIDEO LIBRARY AND ASSETS

As mentioned previously, SOSC has developed a wide assortment of various videos, templates and other media assets for those who license the program and join us in our efforts. These assets are protected by copyright infringement laws, and thus are not available to the general public to view.

SOSC has developed several tools to help get this message out in our community. We have supplied outdoor and indoor banners to every school, organization, and club along with posters and flyers. We also created a series of videos and PSAs that have aired on television, radio and social media platforms.

If you would like more information on how you can implement the Know Your Role message in your school, club or organization, contact USA Softball’s MarComm team at comms@usasoftball.com.

APPENDIX

- A. SAFESPORT CODE**
- B. REPORTING PROTOCOLS**
- C. EVENT SIGNAGE**
- D. SAFETY PLANNING TOOLKIT**
- E. SAMPLE CONSENT FORMS**
- F. MAAPP AT-A-GLANCE**
- G. PRE-EVENT COMMUNICATION FOR ADULT PARTICIPANTS**

APPENDIX A: **SAFESPORT CODE**

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