



**USRowing**

## **ABUSE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY**

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

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## INTRODUCTION & USE OF THIS POLICY

USRowing's mission is to steward, strengthen, and grow American rowing by championing performance and igniting passion for the sport. Delivering on that mission starts with our commitment to Safeguarding, which USRowing defines **as the range of measures USRowing employs to promote and protect the welfare of all participants, including their physical and psychological well-being.**

Rowing is a lifelong activity, where athletes engage to have fun, compete, and spend time with friends. Rowing encourages a healthy lifestyle and builds self-confidence by teaching goal setting, teamwork, and time management skills.

Unfortunately, sport can be a high-risk environment for misconduct, including physical and sexual abuse. **All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the ideals of both the Olympic and Paralympic Movement and USRowing.** Misconduct may damage a Participant's psychological well-being; athletes who have been mistreated may experience social embarrassment, emotional turmoil, psychological scars, loss of self-esteem and negative impacts on family, friends, and the sport. Misconduct often hurts an athlete's competitive performance and may cause him or her to drop out of sport entirely.

USRowing is committed to improving the development and safety of athletes and participants involved in rowing. USRowing publishes this USRowing Abuse Prevention and Response Policy (the "**Policy**") as a resource to guide the development, implementation and internal review of effective athlete safety and misconduct prevention strategies for rowing activities run by USRowing.

[The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017](#) (Public Law 115-126) took effect in February 2018 ("**SafeSport Act**"). The SafeSport Act designated the United States Center for SafeSport (the "**Center**") as the official safe sport organization for all Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, and Para Pan American sports in the United States. To prevent the emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of amateur athletes, the SafeSport Act requires national governing bodies to implement both prevention training and prevention policies.

As a Member Organization of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee ("**USOPC**"), USRowing, its employees, contractors, volunteers, officials, board members, committee members and other designees, members and organizational members (collectively, "**Participants**") are required to comply with the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code of the U.S. and Paralympic Movement (the "**Code**"), including its reporting requirements, available here: [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#).

The Code serves as benchmark by which the Center or USRowing evaluates whether a Code violation has occurred. For violations that fall within the Center's jurisdiction, the Center will determine resolutions and sanctions in connection with the violation. USRowing will respond to and resolve allegations of abuse and misconduct that fall within its jurisdiction, as well as those over which the Center declines jurisdiction pursuant to the procedures outlined in the sections below.

The Code outlines prohibited conduct relating to the following categories for all Participants (hereinafter defined):

- Criminal Charges or Dispositions
- Child Abuse
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Sexual Misconduct

- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Aiding and Abetting
- Misconduct related to Reporting
- Misconduct Related to the Center's Process
- Other Inappropriate Conduct
- Violation of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies ("**MAAPP**")

All Adult Participants in contact with Minor Athletes (hereinafter defined) must adhere to USRowing's MAAPP contained below.

Pursuant to both the SafeSport Act as implemented by the Code and USRowing's Bylaws, the Center has exclusive jurisdiction over all issues involving Sexual Misconduct, Child Abuse, Misconduct related to reporting, Misconduct related to Aiding and Abetting, Abuse of the Process, or Retaliation when it relates to the Center's process and other inappropriate conduct (hereinafter defined). Such issues are to be reported directly to the Center and appropriate local authorities. Any report received by USRowing or a Member Organization of an allegation that falls within the Center's exclusive jurisdiction must be referred directly to the Center immediately and no later than within 24 hours. Such reports to the Center should be made through the reporting form found here: [Report a Concern to the U.S. Center for SafeSport](#).

While non-sexual misconduct issues may be reported directly to the Center, USRowing encourages initial reporting of such matters to the relevant Member Organization (hereinafter defined) using the Member Organization's internal reporting processes. If, following review by the Member Organization, the issue remains unresolved or is not susceptible to resolution at the Member Organization level, it must be reported to USRowing using the USRowing reporting form found here: [Report an Incident to USRowing](#).

Many individuals who are identified as reporters under this Policy may also be involved with their local USRowing Member Organizations. The policies contained herein are internal and meant as a guide for activities run directly by USRowing. Member Organizations should have its own individual Safe Sport policies to govern individuals' responsibilities and may include additional or different policies that relate to that specific organization, subject to the minimum requirements of [the Code](#) and the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#). Therefore, individuals should adhere to the set of policies relevant to the role they are acting in at a given time. If the Member Organization does not have its own Policy, this Policy will be automatically in force.

## DEFINITIONS

The definitions below apply to all sections of this Policy. Where definitions are not included herein, but are contained in the SafeSport Code, the SafeSport Code definitions are adopted as if they are fully set forth herein:

- **Adult or adult:** Any individual 18 years of age or older.
- **Adult Participant:** Any adult (18 years or older) who is:
  - A member or license holder of USRowing or its Member Organizations
  - An employee or board member of USRowing or its Member Organizations
  - Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USRowing or its Member Organizations
  - Authorized, approved, or appointed by USRowing or its Member Organizations to have Regular Contact with or authority over Minor Athletes. This may include volunteers, medical or paramedical personnel staff, team staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, officials, adult athletes who have Regular Contact with a Minor Athlete, staff, interns, independent contractors board members, committee members, other athlete support personnel, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition.
- **Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant (PCA):** An Adult Participant who assists a parasport athlete requiring 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.
- **Advisor:** An Advisor may be any Adult, including an attorney. However, a party or witness involved in the investigation or hearing, or an employee of, board member of, or legal counsel for the USOPC, an NGB, an LAO or the Center, cannot serve as an Advisor, except as noted for parents or legal guardians of Minor Claimants and Minor Respondents, or parents of Adult Claimants and Adult Respondents with a diagnosed intellectual or developmental disability (IDD). Advisors may be provided with the Center's Notice of Decision, Investigation Reports, or other work product deemed confidential under 36 USC § 220541(f)(4)(C) and Section XI.S. of the Code. Misuse or disclosure of confidential information by an Advisor may constitute a violation of the Code for the Participant(s) the Advisor represents, and/or the Advisor themselves if they are a Participant.
- **Amateur Athlete:** An athlete who meets the eligibility standards established by the National Governing Body or Paralympic sports organization for the sport in which the athlete competes.
- **Applicable Adult:** Any Adult Participant who either 1) holds a position of authority over athletes, regardless of the athletes' ages, or 2) has Regular Contact with athletes who are Minors. Adult Participants who only train or compete alongside Minors, without holding any position of authority over them, are not considered Applicable Adults.
- **Athlete:** Any athlete who participates in any USRowing licensed competition or USRowing sanctioned event.
- **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.
- **Billeting:** A residential environment facilitated by an Adult Participant, NGB, 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.
- **Center:** The U.S. Center for SafeSport.
- **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 four years older (determined by birth date) than the Minor Athlete (e.g., a 19-year-old and a 16-year-old).
  - **NOTE:** this exception only applies within the Minor Athlete Prevention Policy and does not apply to any conduct defined in the SafeSport Code.
- **Child, Children, Minor, and Youth:** An individual who is, or is believed by the Respondent to be, under the age

of 18. The terms child, children, Minor and youth are used interchangeably throughout this Policy.

- **Child Abuse:** The term “child abuse” has the meaning set forth in Section 203 of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C. § 20341) or any applicable state law.
- **Claimant:** The person who is alleged to have experienced conduct that constitutes a Code violation, or a violation of this Policy.
- **Coach:** Any adult who has or shares the responsibility for instructing, teaching, training, or advising an athlete in the context of rowing.
- **Code:** The policies and procedures adopted by the Center for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement’s National Governing bodies, which can be found at [the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Website](#).
- **Consent:** Consent is (a) informed (knowing), (b) voluntary (freely given), and (c) active (not passive). Consent must be demonstrated by clear words or actions, indicating that a person who is legally and functionally competent has indicated permission to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent to any one form of sexual activity does not automatically imply Consent for any other forms of sexual activity. Previous relationships or prior Consent does not imply Consent to future sexual activity. Once given, Consent can be withdrawn at any time through clear words or actions. The Consent construct can also be applied to other forms of non-sexual conduct, such as Hazing or other forms of Physical or Emotional Misconduct or Other Inappropriate Conduct. Consent cannot be obtained (1) by force, (2) by taking advantage of the Incapacitation of another, when the person initiating sexual activity knew or reasonably should have known that the other was Incapacitated, (3) from someone who lacks Legal Capacity, or (4) when a Power Imbalance exists.
  - 1. Force. Force includes (a) the use of physical violence, (b) threats, (c) intimidation, and (d) coercion.
    - a. Physical violence means that a person is exerting control over another person using physical force. Examples of physical violence include but are not limited to: hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, restraining, strangling, and brandishing or using any weapon.
    - b. Threats are words or actions that would compel a reasonable person to engage in unwanted sexual activity. Examples include but are not limited to: threats to harm a person physically, to reveal private information to harm a person’s reputation, or to deny a person’s ability to participate in sport.
    - c. Intimidation is an implied threat that menaces or causes reasonable fear in another person. A person’s size, alone, does not constitute intimidation; however, a person’s size may be used in a way that constitutes intimidation (e.g., blocking access to an exit).
    - d. Coercion is the use of an unreasonable amount of pressure to gain intimate or sexual access. Coercion is more than an effort to persuade, entice, or attract another person to engage in sexual activity. When a person makes clear their decision not to participate in a form of Sexual Contact or Sexual Intercourse, their decision to stop, or their decision not to go beyond a certain sexual interaction, continued pressure can be coercive. Coercion includes coercive control, which is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation, and intimidation, or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten another. Whether conduct is coercive depends on (i) the frequency of the application of the pressure, (ii) the intensity of the pressure, (iii) the degree of isolation of the person being pressured, and (iv) the duration of the pressure.
  - 2. Incapacitation. Incapacitation means that a person lacks the ability to make informed, rational judgments about whether to engage in sexual activity. A person who is incapacitated is unable, temporarily or permanently, to give Consent because of mental or physical helplessness, sleep, unconsciousness, or lack of awareness that sexual activity is taking place. A person may be incapacitated because of consuming alcohol or other drugs, or due to a temporary or permanent physical or mental health condition. Incapacitation is a state beyond drunkenness or intoxication. A person is not necessarily incapacitated merely because of drinking or using drugs. The impact of alcohol and other drugs varies from person to person and is evaluated under the specific

circumstances of a matter. A Respondent's being impaired by alcohol or other drugs is not a defense to any violation of the Code.

- 3. **Legal Capacity.** Minors cannot Consent to conduct of a sexual nature. While the legal age of Consent varies under state and federal law, the age of capacity under the Code is 18. A close-in-age exception will be applied to any Consent-related Policy violation between an Adult and a Minor, or between two Minors, when there is no Power Imbalance and when the age difference is no more than three years. However, even if a close-in-age exception applies, while a Minor may not lack Legal Capacity to Consent, lack of Consent may still be present on other grounds as enumerated herein. The following are not defenses and do not negate a potential Code violation involving another individual being at or below a certain specified age:
  - a. Ignorance of the person's actual age;
  - b. Misrepresentation of age by the person; or
  - c. The Participant's bona fide belief that the person was at or over the specified age.
- 4. **Power Imbalance.** See the definition of Power Imbalance on page 9.
- **Criminal Charge or Disposition:** Means that a Participant (a) is or has been subject to any disposition or resolution of a criminal proceeding, other than an adjudication of not guilty, including, but not limited to: an adjudication of guilt or admission to a criminal violation, a plea to the charge or a lesser included offense, a plea of no contest, any plea analogous to an "Alford" or "Kennedy" plea, the disposition of the proceeding through a diversionary program, deferred adjudication, deferred prosecution, disposition of supervision, conditional dismissal, juvenile delinquency adjudication, or similar arrangement; (b) A Criminal Charge includes (1) being arrested and presently subject to bond obligations or conditional release, (2) any pending criminal charge(s), or (3) active warrant(s) for arrest. Criminal Charges may be evaluated by USRowing upon the original charges, amended charges, or those to which a plea was entered.
- **Cyber Abuse:** Cyber Abuse is engaging in repeated and/or severe conduct, directed at or about another, using electronic communications, social media, or other technology, with the intent to intimidate, abuse, threaten, harass, or frighten another, or for the purpose of causing a third person(s) to intimidate, abuse, threaten, harass, or frighten another. When assessing whether a single act is sufficiently severe to constitute Cyber Abuse, considerations include but are not limited to the conduct itself, and the direct or indirect impact of the conduct. Petty slights, Minor inconveniences, and lack of good manners do not constitute Cyber Abuse unless the slights, inconveniences, or lack of manners, when taken individually or in combination and under the totality of the circumstances, meet the standards set forth above. Cyber Abuse includes, but is not limited to, doxing (or doxxing), spreading false or malicious rumors, or disseminating real or simulated explicit images without Consent.
- **Dual Relationship:** 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.
- **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 its organization's protocols.
- **Event:** USRowing sanctioned or organized travel, lodging, practice, competition, health or medical treatment, and the meaning set forth in the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C. § 20341).
- **Facility:** Any facility (including docks, gyms, bus/vans or other locations used by a team or rowing organization), when at such time the Facility is either owned or being leased, rented, or used by USRowing or Member Organization.
- **Intellectual or Development Disability (IDD):** Developmental disabilities are diagnosed disabilities that manifest before age 22 and result in substantial functional limitations in language, learning, mobility, and other areas of major life activity. Intellectual disabilities are diagnosed developmental disabilities characterized by limitations in both intellectual functioning and practical skills people use in their everyday lives, such as self-

direction, language skills, and social skills.

- **Interaction with Athletes:** Contact in association with any USRowing licensed or sanctioned activity or Event.
- **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
  - Competition site visits
- **Local Affiliated Organization (LAO):** A regional, state, or local club or organization that is directly affiliated with an NGB or that is affiliated with an NGB by its direct affiliation with a regional or state affiliate of said NGB. 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 (see Member Organization definition below).
- **Member Organization:** A rowing organization with active USRowing organizational membership. This also includes any organization that hosts a property or event that USRowing sanctions, including competitions, training programs, clinics, and courses. All Member Organizations of USRowing are considered to be an LAO.
- **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 the USOPC, USRowing or its Member Organizations.
- **National Governing Body (NGB):** A U.S. Olympic National Governing Body, Pan American Sport Organization, or Paralympic 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.
- **Olympic and Paralympic Movement (“the Movement”):** The Movement is the collective term for all organizations, athletes, and activities under the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC). If you’re a member of USRowing, participate in a USRowing Member Organization, or take part in a USRowing events, you are part of the Movement.
- **Partial or Full Jurisdiction:** Includes any sanctioned Event (including all travel and lodging in connection with the event) by the NGB, SOPC, or LAO, or any facility that the NGB, USOPC, or LAO owns, leases, or rents for practice, training, or competition.
- **Power Imbalance:** A Power Imbalance refers to an actual or perceived unequal distribution of power and authority between individuals. A Power Imbalance is presumed to exist, but may be rebutted, in (a) any coach-Athlete relationship or (b) any other relationship where a Participant has authority or control over another person, is in a position to confer, grant, or deny a benefit or advancement to the person, or is responsible for the physical or psychological well-being of the person. Once a coach-Athlete relationship is established, there is a rebuttable presumption that a Power Imbalance exists throughout the coach-Athlete relationship (regardless of age) and is presumed to continue for Minor Athletes after the coach-Athlete relationship

terminates until the Athlete reaches 25 years of age. Examples in which a Power Imbalance may also exist, but is not presumed, include relationships between an Athlete and another Participant in positions such as sport specific health-care providers, sport science support staff, care or support persons, sport judges, referees or officials, or when an Intimate Relationship existed before the sport relationship (e.g., a relationship between two spouses or life partners that preceded the sport relationship). A Power Imbalance may also exist between one person and another based on the totality of the circumstances and depends on several factors, any one of which may be sufficient alone, including but not limited to: the nature and extent of any implied or perceived authority or control; the supervisory, evaluative, or other authority over the person; the actual relationship between the parties; the parties' respective roles; the nature and duration of the relationship; the age of the parties involved; whether there is an aggressor; whether there is a significant disparity in age, size, strength, or mental capacity; seniority; ability; public profile; sexual orientation; racial or ethnic identity; national origin; level of physical, intellectual, or other disability.

- **Regular Contact:** Ongoing interaction where an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any amateur athlete(s), virtual or in-person, who is a Minor.

**USRowing defines ongoing interactions as five (5) or more instances of In-Program Contact during a 12-month period.<sup>1</sup>**

- **Residential Environment:** A place in which participants live or stay temporarily. Residential environments include, but are not limited to, onsite housing at training facilities, hotel stays, or rentals (i.e. VRBO, Airbnb, HomeToGo, etc.)
- **Respondent:** A Participant who is alleged to have violated the Code or this Policy.
- **Sexual Misconduct:** Offenses (further described in Section IV of this Policy including, but not limited to:
  - Sexual harassment
  - Non-consensual sexual contact (or attempts to commit the same)
  - Non-consensual sexual intercourse (or attempts to commit the same)
- IV. Sexual exploitation
- V. Bullying or hazing, or other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature
- **Third-Party Reporter:** Individual other than the Claimant bringing reports ("**Third-party Report**") under this Policy.
- **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.
- **USRowing Designee:** USRowing Staff, USRowing Licensed Officials, USRowing Board members, USRowing National Team Coaches and Technical Advisors, USRowing Trainers, Athletes selected by USRowing to select the United States, or any other individual that USRowing formally authorizes, approves, or appoints to (a) serve in a position of authority over, or (b) have Regular Contact with any Athlete.

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this definition, a competition is considered a single instance of In-Program Contact regardless of duration.

# MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES (MAAPP)

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is committed to building a sports community where Participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct. USRowing supports this mission and strives for our competition and training environments to be free of abuse. This set of policies is for keeping young athletes safe.

## A. AUTHORITY: PREVENTION TRAINING & POLICIES

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 **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 uninterruptible 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).

### 1. What is the MAAPP?

To that end, the Center has developed the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP). The MAAPP is a collection of proactive prevention and training policies for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. It has four primary components:

- Organizational Requirements for Education and Training Prevention Policies
- An Education & Training Policy that requires training for certain Adult Participants within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement
- Required Prevention Policies, focused on limiting one-on-one interactions between Adult Participants and Minor Athletes, that Organizations within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement must implement to prevent abuse
- Recommended Prevention Policies.

The Center developed the MAAPP to assist National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Local Affiliated Organizations (LAOs), the U.S. Olympic & 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 if there is no power imbalance. Additionally, there may be other instances when one-on-one interactions could occur, and in those cases, these policies provide strategies 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](#) (refer to sections III-VII of this Policy). Additionally, other resources are available that may assist organizations in improving athlete safety.<sup>2</sup>

## **2. 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 act in their respective programs for violations of the MAAPP by Adult Participants. 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.

## **3. 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.

## **4. What is the Scope of the MAAPP?**

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

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

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

## **5. Am I Required to Take SafeSport Training?**

Adult Participants within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement who have (i) Regular Contact with amateur athletes who are a Minor, (ii) authority over amateur athletes who are a Minor, or (iii) are employees or board members of USRowing or Member Organizations as well as (iv) adult athletes who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are a Minor are required to take the *SafeSport Trained Core* course or its relevant refresher training as applicable. The specific training requirements can be found in Part II and Member Organizations shall implement policies and procedures sufficient to comply with federal requirements.

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<sup>2</sup> Saul, J., & Audage, N.C. (2007). [Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-Servicing Organization: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures](#). Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Canadian Centre for Child Protection. (2014). [Child Sexual Abuse: It Is Your Business](#). Winnipeg, Manitoba: Canadian Centre for Child Protection; The Australian Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. (2017). [Final Report](#).

## **B. REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

Violations of these MAAPP policies can be reported to USRowing by submitting a USRowing Incident Report Form, which can be found at [this link](#), or by contacting the members of the Safeguarding Team at: [USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org](mailto:USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org),

## **C. MAAPP PROVISIONS**

### **1. Organizational Requirements for Education and Training Prevention Policies**

USRowing and all Member Organizations must implement proactive policies designed to prevent abuse. These organizational requirements are described below.

#### **a) Organizational Requirements for Education & Training**

USRowing must track whether Adult Participants under its jurisdiction complete the required training listed in Part II. USRowing highly recommends Member Organizations also track whether Adult Participants under its jurisdiction complete the required training listed in Part II.

USRowing and Member Organizations 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, USRowing must track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to Minor Athletes.
- (b) USRowing is not required to track individual course completions of Minor Athletes.

USRowing and Member Organizations must, every 12 months, offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.

- (c) For training to parents, USRowing must track the description of the training and how the training was provided to parents.
- (d) USRowing is not required to track individual course completions of parents.

#### **b) Required Prevention Policies and Implementation**

USRowing 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

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. USRowing may choose to implement stricter standards than the model policies. USRowing must also require that its Member Organizations (LAO) implement these policies within each Member Organization. USRowing and Member Organizations must implement these policies for all In-Program Contact.

- (h) At sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under its jurisdiction, the organization must take steps to ensure the policies are implemented and followed.
- (i) For In-Program Contact that occurs outside USRowing's or Member Organization'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.

USRowing and Member Organizations must have a reporting mechanism to accept reports that an Adult Participant is violating USRowing's Minor Athlete abuse prevention policies. USRowing and Member Organizations 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**

USRowing, its Member Organizations and the USOPC may adopt the MAAPP as-is or adapt it to fit their needs. Regardless, USRowing must submit their policies to the Center at [compliance@safesport.org](mailto:compliance@safesport.org) for review and approval by April 1, 2026. The Center will approve, approve with modifications, or deny the policies. If the Center denies the proposed Policy, the mandatory components of Part III become the default Policy until the Center approves the Policy.

The MAAPP has been adopted by USRowing in accordance with the U.S. Center for SafeSport and USOPC guidelines. The MAAPP is binding on USRowing, Members and Member Organizations. Member Organizations are expected to incorporate the MAAPP into their individual Safe Sport Policies. Member Organizations are also permitted to independently adopt policies that enhance or further the athlete protections set forth in the MAAPP, but are prohibited from adopting any policies that are, in the judgment of USRowing, less protective of athletes than the MAAPP. Further, should there exist any conflict between the MAAPP and the provisions of a Member Organization's athlete protection policies, the MAAPP will take priority over any such conflicting Policy.

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 USRowing 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 USRowing from the Center.

## **2. Education & Training Policy**

### **a) Mandatory Child Abuse Prevention Training for Adult Participants**

#### Adult Participants Required to Complete Training

- (i) The following Adult Participants must complete the SafeSport Trained Core course or its relevant refresher training as applicable, either through the Center's online training available on the USRowing [Membership Portal](#) every 12 months:
  1. Adult Participants who have Regular Contact with any amateur athlete who is a Minor
  2. Adult Participants who have authority over any amateur athlete who is a Minor
  3. Adult Participants who are an employee or board member of USRowing, or a Member Organization
- (ii) Adult Participants who are medical providers for USRowing and are required to take

training under A) (1) (a) can take the *Health Professionals: Your Role in Preventing Abuse in Sport* course in lieu of the *SafeSport Trained Core* course

- ii) Specific to USRowing and Member Organizations, the above Adult Participants include the following:
  - (i) USRowing
    - 1. Adult Participants who have Regular Contact with any amateur athlete who is a Minor
    - 2. Any adult authorized by USRowing to have Regular Contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a Minor, including:
      - a. Licensed Officials and Referees
      - b. Coaches
      - c. Physical Therapists, Masseurs, and Healthcare Providers
      - d. USRowing adult staff, interns, and Board of Directors
      - e. Adult athletes who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are Minors
  - (2) (Collectively “**USRowing Adults**”)
    - (i) Member Organizations
      - 1. Adult Participants who have Regular Contact with any amateur athlete who is a Minor
      - 2. Any adult authorized by a Member Organization to have Regular Contact with or authority over any amateur athlete who is a Minor
      - 3. Adult staff, interns, and board members of a Member Organization
  - (3) (Collectively “**Member Organization Adults**”)
  - (4) (Collectively “**Required Adults**”)
    - (i) Any USRowing individual not identified in Section 2.A)(1)(a-d) is not required to take the SafeSport Trained Core Course but is encouraged to do so.

#### Timing of Training

Adults Participants must complete this training:

- (a) Before Regular Contact with any amateur athlete who is a Minor begins; and
- (b) Within the first 45 days of either initial membership or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this Policy, whichever comes first.

#### Refresher Training

The above listed Adult Participants must complete a refresher course on an annual basis (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* training. Medical providers can take the SafeSport for Health Professionals course in lieu of the *SafeSport Trained Core* 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**

Minor Athletes of USRowing and/or a USRowing Member Organization are strongly encouraged to take the *SafeSport for Youth Athletes*.

USRowing and Member Organizations, every 12 months, must offer and, subject to parental Consent, give training to Minor Athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.

The Center offers youth courses that meet this requirement. These courses are accessed through the individual’s personal profile on the USRowing [Membership Portal](#).

### **c) Parent Training Must Be Offered**

USRowing and Member Organizations, every 12 months, must offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.

The Center offers a parent course. These courses are accessed through the parent or guardian's personal Supporter Membership profile on the [USRowing Member Database](#).

### **d) Optional Training**

Adult Participants serving in a volunteer capacity and are not athletes, who will not have Regular Contact with or authority over amateur athletes who are Minors, are not required to take training, but should take the Center's brief *Volunteer* course (or *SafeSport Trained Core*) before engaging or interacting with any amateur athletes who are Minors. All others in volunteer support positions who have Regular Contact with or authority over amateur athletes who are Minors are required to take the *SafeSport Trained Core* or *Refresher* courses.

Adult athletes only (who do not have Regular Contact with Minors) are not required to take training but are encouraged to take the *Abuse Prevention for Adult Athletes*.

USRowing and Member Organizations may provide training in addition to the *SafeSport Trained Core*, although they cannot refer to this training as "SafeSport" training.

**NOTE:** Training other than the *SafeSport Trained Core* or *Refresher* does not satisfy this Policy.

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**

Exemptions from this Education & Training Policy may be made on a case-by-case basis for victims/survivors. Requests may be made directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport at [exemptions@safesport.org](mailto:exemptions@safesport.org) or via USRowing at [USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org](mailto:USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org). All exemptions granted by the Center in this category are considered indefinite and do not need to be re-requested each year.

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 or Personal Care Assistant to USRowing via [USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org](mailto:USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org). USRowing will determine whether to grant the exemption. If USRowing grants the exemption, it must track the exemption to ensure it is appropriately applied to the individual's membership status. USRowing will preserve documentation that the exemption was granted and for what duration.

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

## **3. Required Prevention Policies**

The following athlete abuse prevention policies are in effect as of January 1, 2025:

- a)** One-on-one interactions (USRowing is required to establish reasonable procedures to limit on-on-one interactions, as set forth in federal law.)
- b)** Meetings

- c) Individual Training Sessions
- d) Manual Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities and Manual Therapy
- e) Areas where athletes change clothes.
- f) Social media and electronic communications
- g) Transportation
- h) Lodging

#### 4. Required Policies for One-on-One Interactions

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

**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.**

##### a) 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.

(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 a parasport 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 the Organization 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 the Organization'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 their organization'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](https://safesporttrained.org).

### **b) Meetings**

Observable and Interruptible

- (a) Adult Participants must follow the one-on-one interaction Policy in all meetings and individual training sessions where Minor Athlete are present.

### **c) Individual Training Sessions**

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

- (a) Parents/guardians must be allowed to observe the individual training session.

Meetings with licensed mental health care professionals and health care providers (other than athletic trainers<sup>3</sup>)

- (b) If a licensed mental health care professional or 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 USRowing or Member Organization's jurisdiction, the meeting must be observable and interruptible except:

- (i) If the door remains unlocked; and
- (ii) 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
- (iii) USRowing must be notified that the provider will be meeting with a Minor Athlete by a Member Organization and
- (iv) The provider obtains Consent consistent with applicable laws and ethical standards, which can be withdrawn at any time.

Recommended Best Practices

- (c) 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 USRowing or Member Organization'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.
- (d) 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.

### **d) Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities<sup>4</sup> (All Healthcare Provision)**

Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities Requirements

- (a) All In-Program manual therapy and therapeutic and recovery modalities of a Minor Athlete must:
  - (i) Be observable and interruptible; and
  - (ii) Have another Adult Participant physically present for the manual therapy or therapeutic and recovery modality; and
  - (iii) Have documented Consent as explained in subsection (2) below; and

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<sup>3</sup> Athletic trainers who are covered under these policies must follow the "Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities" Policy.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

- (iv) Be performed with the Minor Athlete fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals are always covered; and
- (v) Allow parents/guardians in the room as an observer, except for competition or training venues that limit credentialing; and
- (vi) The provider must narrate the steps in the modality before taking them, seeking assent of the Minor Athlete throughout the process.

#### Consent

- (b) Providers of manual therapy or therapeutic and recovery modalities or USRowing/Member Organization, when applicable, must obtain Consent at least annually from Minor Athletes' parents/guardians before providing any manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities.
- (c) Minor Athletes or their parents/guardians can withdraw Consent at any time.

#### Recommended Best Practices

- (d) USRowing recommends the following components: USRowing recommends obtaining the annual written Consent from a legal guardian with respect to each practitioner providing massage or rubdown/athletic training modality to a Minor Athlete.
- (e) 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 manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities.
- (f) When possible, techniques should be used to reduce physical touch of Minor Athletes.
- (g) Only licensed providers should administer manual therapy or therapeutic and recovery modality.
- (h) Coaches, regardless of whether they are licensed massage therapists, should not massage Minor Athletes.
- (i) Keep treatment room at a suitable temperature where possible (fans or heaters may be required).
- (j) Practitioners should seek to ensure they never place themselves between the athlete and the door.

#### **e) Areas Where Athletes Change**

May Include, but are not limited to, locker rooms, the boathouse, and restrooms.

#### Observable and Interruptible

- (a) Adult Participants must ensure that all one-on-one 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, except if an exception exists.

#### Conduct in Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces

- (b) 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.
- (c) Adult Participants must not remove their clothes or behave in a manner that intentionally or recklessly exposes their breasts, buttocks, groins, or genitals to a Minor Athlete.
- (d) 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.
- (e) Parents/guardians may request in writing that their Minor Athletes not change or shower with Adult Participant(s) during In-Program Contact. USRowing, Member Organizations, and the Adult Participant(s) must abide by this request.

#### Media and Championship Celebrations in Locker Rooms

- (f) USRowing or Member Organization may permit recording or photography in locker rooms for the purpose of highlighting a sport or athletic accomplishment if:
  - (i) Parent/legal guardian Consent has been obtained; and
  - (ii) USRowing or Member Organizations approves the specific instance of recording or photography; and
  - (iii) Two or more Adult Participants are present; and
  - (iv) Everyone is fully clothed.

#### Personal Care Assistants

- (g) 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 in subsection (4)(A)(2) above.

#### Availability and Monitoring of Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces

- (h) USRowing or Member Organizations 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 the USRowing or Member Organization's jurisdiction.
  - (i) USRowing or Member Organizations 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 the USRowing or Member Organization's jurisdiction.

#### Recommended Best Practices

- (j) Adult Participants should make every effort to recognize when a Minor Athlete goes to a locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, check on the Minor Athlete's whereabouts.
- (k) Parents should not enter locker rooms and changing areas unless it is an emergency. 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.

#### **f) Electronic Communications**

##### 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.
- (c) If a Minor Athlete communicates with the Adult Participant first, the Adult Participant must follow this Policy if the Adult Participant responds.
- (d) Only platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication may be used to communicate with Minor Athletes.

##### Team Communication

- (e) 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 another Adult Participant, Minor Athlete's parents/guardians, or another adult family member of the Minor Athletes.

##### Content

- (f) All electronic communication originating from an Adult Participant(s) to a Minor Athlete(s) must be professional in nature unless an exception exists.

#### Requests to discontinue

- (g) Parents/guardians may request in writing that USRowing/Member Organization or an Adult Participant subject to this Policy not contact their Minor Athlete through any form of electronic communication. USRowing/Member Organization and the Adult Participant must abide by any request to discontinue, absent emergency circumstances.

#### Recommended Best Practices

- (h) Hours: Electronic communications should generally only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., unless emergency circumstances exist, or while traveling internationally or during competition travel.
- (i) Social Media Connections: Adult Participants, except those with a Dual Relationship or who meet the Close-in-Age Exception, are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with Minor Athletes and should discontinue existing social media connections with Minor Athletes.

#### **g) Transportation**

##### Observable and Interruptible

- (a) Adult participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact during Transportation is Observable and Interruptible unless an exception exists or:
  - (i) 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.
  - (ii) An Adult Participant meets the In-Program transportation requirements if the Adult Participant is accompanied by another Adult Participant or at least two Minors who are at least 8 years of age.

#### Additional Requirements for Transportation Authorized or Funded by the USRowing/Member Organizations

- (b) Written Consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian is required for all transportation authorized or funded by an USRowing/Member Organizations at least annually.
- (c) Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw Consent at any time.

#### Recommended Best Practices:

- (d) Shared or Carpool Travel Arrangement: USRowing encourages parents/guardians to pick up their Minor Athlete first and drop off their Minor Athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
- (e) 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.

#### **h) Lodging and Residential Environments**

##### 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

#### Hotel Rooms and Other Sleeping Arrangements

- (b) 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 the Organization or the Adult Participant with advance, written Consent for each specific lodging arrangement.
- (c) Written Consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian must be obtained for all In-Program lodging at least annually.
- (d) Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw Consent at any time.

#### Monitoring or Room Checks During In-Program Travel

- (e) If USRowing, Member Organization, 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.

#### Additional Requirements for Lodging Authorized or Funded by the Organization

- (f) Adult Participants that travel overnight with Minor Athlete(s) are deemed to have Authority over Minor Athlete(s) and thus must comply with the USRowing's Education & Training Policy, unless the Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age exception.

#### **i) Additional Recommended Policies for Keeping Young Athletes Safe**

##### Out-of-Program Contact

- (a) 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.

##### Gifting

- (b) 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).
- (c) Gifts that are equally distributed to all athletes and serve a motivational or education purpose are permitted.

##### Photography/Video

- (d) Photographs or videos of athletes may only be taken in public view and must observe generally accepted standards of decency.
- (e) 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.

Turn Your MAAP / SafeSport Policies into Practice: USRowing encourages the following recommendations:

(f) Discuss the Policy:

- Hold regular (minimum twice annually) staff and leadership discussions / trainings to review strategies, best practices, and changes required for the rowing program to implement the Policy
- Hold all rowing program community members accountable to the Policy
- Specifically ensure Minor Athletes and families know the Policy and expectations
- Host seasonal reviews of the MAAP Policy with Minor Athletes. This discussion should include a review of Section 3 of the MAAP provisions above using examples that are relevant to the rowing program's specific team operations, competition, and physical space.

(g) Take Supplemental Action:

- Leadership and coaches complete We Ride Together Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Prevention, Support, and Resources in USRowing's online learning platform, The Launch
- Sign the We Ride Together Pledge available on [weridetgether.today](http://weridetgether.today)
- Make the Policy Visual:
  - Hang the MAAP signs around the boathouse in easy-to-see places to ensure the language and expectations are part of the culture
  - Leverage the We Ride Together materials on [weridetgether.today](http://weridetgether.today)
- Gather feedback from all athletes (especially Minor Athletes) and incorporate their feedback into Policy and practice. USRowing recommends two anonymous feedback surveys per year.

## JURISDICTION

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (“the Center”), pursuant to the [Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017](#), is the independent national safe sport organization for the United States and has jurisdiction over the USOPC and each NGB with regard to safeguarding athletes against abuse in sport within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement (“the Movement”). When the Center accepts jurisdiction over a SafeSport report, it becomes responsible for managing and resolving the SafeSport report. This ensures a professional, impartial, and cost-effective response to the most serious forms of misconduct. During this time, USRowing and its Member Organizations may not conduct their own SafeSport investigation but may take certain steps to ensure safety, maintain operations, and comply with external legal obligations.

### D. EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION

Certain categories of misconduct fall within the Center’s exclusive jurisdiction. Allegations including the following must be reported to the Center, and if the Center accepts jurisdiction, it will investigate and resolve them:

- Sexual Misconduct, including, without limitation, child sexual abuse and any misconduct that is reasonably related to an underlying allegation of Sexual Misconduct
- Criminal Charges or Dispositions involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct
- Misconduct Related to Reporting, where the underlying allegation involves Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct
- Misconduct Related to Aiding and Abetting, Abuse of Process, or Retaliation, when it relates to the Center’s process
- Other Inappropriate Conduct, as defined in the Code
- Willful Tolerance or Cyber Abuse when the underlying conduct is related to any allegations of exclusive jurisdiction listed above or the conduct is sexual in nature

After the Center concludes its investigative procedures, USRowing, USRowing’s Member Organizations, and the USOPC may review the findings and determine if any additional non-SafeSport Policy violations apply.

### E. DISCRETIONARY JURISDICTION

For other types of misconduct, the Center may, but is not required to, take jurisdiction. The Center has discretionary jurisdiction over allegations involving:

- Non-sexual Child Abuse
- Emotional or Physical misconduct, including stalking, bullying behaviors, hazing and harassment
- Criminal Charges or Dispositions not involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct
- USRowing Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) or other similar Proactive Policy violations
- Misconduct Related to Aiding and Abetting, Abuse of Process, or Retaliation, when it relates to the processes of the USOPC, an NGB, an LAO, or any other organization under the Center’s jurisdiction
- Willful Tolerance or Cyber Abuse when the underlying conduct is related to any allegations of discretionary jurisdiction listed above or the conduct is non-sexual in nature

If the Center declines jurisdiction or later reassigns it, USRowing, USRowing’s Member Organizations, or the USOPC may investigate and resolve the matter according to its policies and procedures.

## **F. Concurrent Investigations Outside of the Movement**

Investigations by external bodies, such as law enforcement, courts, schools, or universities, may proceed at the same time as a Center investigation, provided they are not conducted by USRowing, a Member Organization, or the USOPC.

At all times USRowing and Member Organizations remain responsible for:

- Maintaining safety, and implementing safety plans.
- Meeting mandatory reporting obligations.
- Making necessary operational decisions.

## **G. JURISDICTION, NOTIFICATION & PROCESS**

Before the Center expressly exercises jurisdiction over a SafeSport report:

- The relevant organization, USRowing or the Member Organization, may implement necessary and appropriate measures to address any allegations of misconduct.
- If USRowing or a Member Organization has reason to believe that the allegations presented fall within the Center's exclusive jurisdiction, the organization, while able to impose measures, may not investigate or resolve those allegations.

After the Center exercises jurisdiction over a SafeSport report (whether exclusive or discretionary jurisdiction):

- Any measures imposed by USRowing or a Member Organization (if communicated to USRowing and the Center) are automatically adopted by the Center and remain in effect unless modified.
- For conduct occurring in competition or field of play, USRowing and Member Organizations may impose a penalty consistent with the sport's competition rules and regulations.
- USRowing and Member Organizations may implement any necessary safety plan(s), temporary measure(s), make employment decisions, and/or impose penalties pursuant to the bullet point above.
- USRowing and Member Organizations may also make decisions regarding membership, licenses, certifications, eligibility decisions, or other analogous decisions, as long as they do not conduct an investigation and are instead relying on (1) reports and evidence received directly by the USRowing/Member Organization, (2) publicly available information, and/or (3) the results of a background check screening report. USRowing shall inform the Center of any safety plan(s), Temporary Measures(s), employment, membership, license, certification, eligibility, or analogous decisions, or competition/field of play penalties that it or its Member Organization imposes within 72 hours of imposition.
- USRowing and Member Organizations may not investigate or attempt to resolve the SafeSport allegation itself
- Other entities outside of the Movement may conduct concurrent investigations regarding the same or substantially related matters (e.g., Title IX, law enforcement, etc.).

When allegations fall under discretionary jurisdiction and the Center has not taken the case:

- USRowing or the Member Organization may investigate and resolve the matter.
- If the Center later exercises jurisdiction, USRowing and/or the Member Organization must stop the SafeSport investigation and defer to the Center.

USRowing may refer matters to Member Organizations when appropriate and may reassume authority if necessary.

If and when the Center accepts jurisdiction of a SafeSport report, it will normally issue a Notice of Jurisdiction to USRowing and USRowing may at its discretion provide the Notice of Jurisdiction to the relevant Member Organizations.

At the completion of the Center's investigation or any time applicable:

- USRowing and its Member Organizations must enforce any Temporary Measures or Sanctions issued by the Center.

## **H. MANDATORY REPORTING**

Adult Participants have mandatory reporting requirements related to Prohibited Conduct, which is addressed in the Reporting section, below.

## **PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

### **I. GENERALLY**

All Participants are bound by and must comply with this Policy as well as the Code. Participants are responsible for knowing the information outlined herein, and in the Code, and by virtue of being a Participant, have expressly agreed to this Policy and the Code, including the applicable policies and procedures.

Participation in USRowing licensed and sanctioned activities is a privilege, not a right. Such participation may be limited, conditioned, suspended, terminated, or denied if a Participant's conduct is or was inconsistent with the Code, this Policy, and/or the best interests of the sport of rowing and those who participate in it.

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to engage in or tolerate: (i) Prohibited Conduct; (ii) any conduct that would violate any current or previous Center or USRowing standards analogous to Prohibited Conduct that existed at the time of the alleged conduct; or (iii) any conduct that would violate community standards analogous to Prohibited Conduct that existed at the time of the alleged conduct, including then-applicable criminal and/or civil laws.

USRowing formally adopts the definitions of Prohibited Conduct contained in the Code and set forth below. Any changes to the Code's categories and definitions of misconduct are immediately adopted by USRowing and effective upon the Center's publication of them unless otherwise noted. Prohibited Conduct includes:

- Criminal Charge or Disposition
- Child Abuse
- Sexual Misconduct
- Emotional and Physical Misconduct, including Stalking, Bullying, Hazing, and Harassment
- Aiding and Abetting
- Misconduct Related to Reporting
- Other Inappropriate Conduct
- Violation of USRowing MAAPP

All Participants must familiarize themselves with each form of misconduct and the policies herein and in the Code and must refrain from engaging in misconduct and/or violating any of these policies.

## J. CRIMINAL CHARGE OR DISPOSITION

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to have a Criminal Charge or Disposition. Criminal Conduct is relevant to an individual's fitness to participate in sport. The age of a Criminal Charge or Disposition is not relevant to whether a violation of this Policy occurred but may be considered for sanctioning purposes.

**Sex Offender Registry:** A Participant who is currently on any state, federal, territorial, or tribal sex offender registry is ineligible to be a Participant.

## K. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT & CHILD ABUSE

USRowing applies the same policies prohibiting Sexual Misconduct and Child Abuse as the applicable policies of the Code, which can be found [here](#). All persons within the jurisdiction of USRowing shall comply with the Sexual Misconduct and Child Abuse policies of the Code. Any violation of the Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse policies of the Code by a Participant shall subject such person to appropriate disciplinary action by the Center and/or USRowing, including, but not limited to, suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

**Prohibited Conduct and Jurisdiction:** Participants are prohibited from violating any of the Sexual Misconduct policies set forth in the Code, which prohibit sexual behavior involving Minors by any adult Participant and in some cases between Minors, including without limitation:

- Sexual Harassment
- Non-consensual Sexual Contact (or attempts to commit the same)
- Non-consensual Sexual Intercourse (or attempts to commit the same)
- Sexual Exploitation
- Exposing a Minor to Sexual Content/Imagery
- Bullying or Hazing or Other Inappropriate Conduct of a sexual nature, including:
  - An adult Participant engaging in an intimate or romantic relationship where a Power Imbalance exists.
  - An Adult Participant intentionally exposing private areas, or inducing another to do so, to an adult where there is a Power Imbalance, or to a Minor, or
  - An Adult Participant engaging in inappropriate physical contact with a Participant where a Power Imbalance exists.

## L. EMOTIONAL & PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to engage in Emotional or Physical Misconduct, when that misconduct is reasonably related to sport, which includes, without limitation:

- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Bullying Behaviors
- Hazing
- Harassment
- Threats

### 1. Emotional Misconduct

Emotional Misconduct includes: (i) Verbal Acts, (ii) Physical Acts, (iii) Acts that Deny Attention or Support, (iv) Criminal Conduct, and/or (v) Stalking. Emotional Misconduct is determined by the objective behaviors, not whether harm is intended or results from the behavior.

- a) **Verbal Acts:** Repeatedly and excessively verbally assaulting or attacking someone personally in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.
- b) **Physical Acts:** Repeated and/or severe aggressive behaviors, including but not limited to, throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at or in the presence of others, punching walls, windows, or other objects.
- c) **Acts that Deny Attention or Support:** Ignoring or isolating a person for extended periods of time, including routinely or arbitrarily excluding a Participant from practice.
- d) **Criminal Conduct:** Emotional Misconduct includes any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., child abuse, child neglect).
- e) **Stalking:** Stalking when a person purposefully engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific person, and knows or should know, that the course of conduct would cause a reasonable person to (i) fear for their safety, (ii) the safety of a third person, or (iii) to experience substantial emotional distress.  
 “Stalking” also includes “cyber-stalking,” wherein a person stalks another using electronic media, such as the internet, social networks, blogs, cell phones, texts, or other similar devices or forms of contact.  
 “Course of conduct” means at least two or more acts, in which a person directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about another person, or interferes with another person’s property.  
 “Substantial emotional distress” means significant mental suffering or anguish.
- f) **Exclusion:** Emotional Misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance. Emotional Misconduct also does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of Participant’s participation.

## 2. Physical Misconduct

Physical Misconduct is any intentional contact or non-contact behavior that causes, or reasonably threatens to cause, physical harm to another person. Examples of Physical Misconduct may include, without limitation:

- a) **Contact Violations:** Punching, beating, biting, striking, strangling, or slapping another; intentionally hitting another with objects, such as sporting equipment; encouraging or knowingly permitting an Athlete to return to play prematurely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional.
- b) **Non-Contact violations:** Isolating a person in a confined space, such as locking an Athlete in a small space; forcing an Athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g., requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface); withholding, recommending against, or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention, or sleep; providing alcohol to a person under the legal drinking age; providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to another.
- c) **Criminal Conduct:** Physical Misconduct includes any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., child abuse, child neglect, assault).
- d) **Exclusion:** Physical Misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching, and kicking are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports but have no place in rowing. Physical Misconduct also does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of Participant’s participation.

### 3. Bullying Behavior

Repeated and/or severe behavior(s) that are (i) aggressive, (ii) directed at a Minor, and (iii) intended or likely to hurt, control, or diminish the Minor emotionally, physically, or sexually. Bullying-like behaviors directed at adults are addressed under forms of misconduct, such as Hazing and/or Harassment. Examples of Bullying Behavior may include, without limitation, repeated and/or severe:

- a) Physical:** Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, strangling, spitting, or slapping, or throwing objects (such as sporting equipment) at another person.
- b) Verbal:** Ridiculing, taunting, name-calling or intimidating or threatening to cause someone harm.
- c) Social Media, Including Cyberbullying and Cyber Abuse:** Use of rumors or false statements about someone to diminish that person's reputation; using electronic communications, social media or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate someone; socially excluding someone and asking others to do the same; or posting or sharing comments or images (real or simulated) about a Minor on social media, group chats or text messages, or other public or nonpublic forums.
- d) Criminal Conduct:** Bullying Behavior includes any conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.
- e) Exclusion:** Conduct may not rise to the level of Bullying Behavior if it is merely rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons who perceive they have incompatible views and/or positions. Bullying does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance.

Sexual Bullying-like Behaviors directed at Adults are addressed under other forms of misconduct, such as Sexual Hazing or Sexual Harassment.

### 4. Hazing

Any conduct that subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, humiliate, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of joining or being socially accepted by a group, team, or organization. Purported Consent by the person subjected to Hazing is not a defense, regardless of the person's perceived willingness to cooperate or participate. Examples of Hazing include:

- a) Contact Acts:** Tying, taping, or otherwise physically restraining another person; beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault.
- b) Non-Contact Acts:** Requiring or forcing the consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs or other substances, including participation in binge drinking and drinking games; personal servitude; requiring social actions (e.g., public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule; excessive training requirements demanded of only particular individuals on a team that serve no reasonable or productive training purpose; sleep deprivation; otherwise unnecessary schedule disruptions; withholding of water and/or food; restrictions on personal hygiene.
- c) Criminal Acts:** Any act or conduct that constitutes hazing under applicable federal or state law.
- d) Exclusion:** Conduct may not rise to the level of hazing if it is merely rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as a part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons who perceive they have incompatible views and/or positions. Hazing does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance.

## 5. Harassment

Repeated and/or severe conduct that (a) causes fear, humiliation, or annoyance, (b) offends or degrades, (c) creates a hostile environment (as defined above), or (d) reflects discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority, or power over an individual or group based on age, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, national origin, or mental or physical disability; or (e) any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law. Whether conduct is harassing depends on the totality of the circumstances, including the nature, frequency, intensity, location, context, and duration of the behavior.

Conduct may not rise to the level of Harassment if it is merely rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as a part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons who perceive they have incompatible views and/or positions. Harassment does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance.

## 6. Threats

A Participant violates this Policy by threatening to harm another Participant. A threat to harm others includes any written, verbal, physical or electronically transmitted expression of intent to physically injure or harm someone else. A threat may be communicated directly to the intended victim or communicated to a third party. Threatening behavior by a Participant is prohibited in any manner in connection with any USRowing-sanctioned activities or events.

## M. AIDING & ABETTING

Aiding and Abetting occurs when a Participant aids, assists, facilitates, promotes, or encourages the commission of Prohibited Conduct by a Participant, including but not limited to, when an Adult Participant knowingly:

- a) Aids, assists, facilitates, promotes, or encourages the commission of Prohibited Conduct by a Participant.
- b) Allows any person who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by the Center or USRowing to be in any way associated with or employed by a Member Organization or organization affiliated with or holding itself out as affiliated with USRowing, an NGB, LAO, the USOPC, or the Olympic & Paralympic Movement.
- c) Allows any person who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by the Center or USRowing to coach or instruct Participants.
- d) Allows any person who has been identified as ineligible by the Center or USRowing to have ownership interest in a facility, an organization, or its related entities, if that facility/organization/related entity is affiliated with or holds itself out as affiliated with an NGB, LAO, USOPC or the Olympic & Paralympic Movement.
- e) Provides any coaching-related advice or service to an Athlete who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by USRowing.
- f) Allows any person to violate the terms of their suspension or any other sanctions imposed by the Center or USRowing.

In addition, a Participant also violates this Policy if someone acts on behalf of the Participant to engage in aiding or Abetting, or if the guardian, family member, including Minor Participants, engages in Aiding or Abetting.

## **N. INTENTIONALLY FILING A FALSE ALLEGATION**

Any person making a knowingly false allegation in a matter over which USRowing has jurisdiction shall be subject to disciplinary action by USRowing.

- a) An allegation is false if the events reported did not occur, and the person making the report knows the events did not occur.
- b) A false allegation is different from an unsubstantiated allegation; an unsubstantiated allegation means there is insufficient supporting evidence to determine whether an allegation is true or false. Absent demonstrable misconduct, an unsubstantiated allegation alone is not grounds for a violation.

## **O. MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES/PROACTIVE POLICIES**

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to violate any provision of the MAAPP or other proactive policies adopted by USRowing. Proactive policies set standards for professional boundaries, minimize the appearance of impropriety, and have the effect of preventing boundary violations and prohibiting grooming tactics. “Grooming” describes the process whereby a person engages in a series or pattern of behaviors with a goal of engaging in sexual misconduct. Grooming is initiated when a person seeks out a vulnerable Minor. Once selected, offenders will then earn the Minor’s trust, and potentially the trust of the Minor’s family. After the offender has engaged the Minor in sexually inappropriate behavior, the offender seeks to maintain control over him/her. Grooming occurs through direct, in-person and/or online contact.

## **P. WILLFUL TOLERANCE**

A Participant violates this Policy by willfully tolerating any form of Prohibited Misconduct.

## **Q. PROHIBITION OF RETALIATION**

USRowing expressly prohibits retaliation before, during, and after the submission of a complaint or the process of an investigation (whether led by a Member Organization, USRowing, or by the US Center for SafeSport). Retaliation is any adverse action taken by a Participant against a person participating in USRowing proceedings, or the Center’s proceedings.

Retaliation includes threatening, intimidating, harassing, coercing, or any other conduct that would discourage a reasonable person from engaging or participating in USRowing’s processes and proceedings when the action is reasonably related to the report or engagement with USRowing. Retaliation may be present even where there is a finding that no violation occurred.

Retaliation does not include good-faith action lawfully pursued in response to report of a USRowing Policy violation.

## **REPORTING**

This Policy is designed to reduce misconduct and abuse, but it can still occur. Participants shall follow the reporting procedures set forth in the reporting Policy below. USRowing tracks reported allegations and outcomes both within its jurisdiction and for those over which the Center declines jurisdiction. USRowing and Member Organizations do not interfere in, attempt to interfere in, or attempt to influence the outcome of any Center investigation.

Adult Participants (18 years of age or older) are required to know their reporting requirements under this Policy, the Code, state law, and federal law.

## R. REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

An adult Participant who learns of information or reasonably suspects that a child has suffered an incident of child abuse or neglect, including but not limited to sexual abuse, must **immediately**:

- Make a report to law enforcement (or in some states child protective services)  
**AND**
- Make a report to the Center [here](#) or (833)-587-7233  
**AND**
- Comply with any other applicable reporting requirements under state law.

**Reporting to the Center alone is not sufficient.** Individuals must report to both the Center and to law enforcement and comply with any other applicable state or federal laws. Child abuse includes incidents that involved a victim who is a Minor at the time of the alleged incident, even if the victim is now an adult.

**Law enforcement:** Please visit <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting/how/> for more information on reporting to law enforcement/child protective services.

An adult Participant may make a report to USRowing, but a report to USRowing alone is not sufficient and will not satisfy the reporter's reporting obligations.

## S. REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

All reports of Sexual Misconduct must be reported directly to the Center [here](#) or (833)-587-7233. No statutes of limitation apply to reports of incidents of Sexual Misconduct. All such reports received by USRowing will be forwarded to the Center.

Reporting such conduct to the Center does not satisfy an Adult Participant's obligation to report to law enforcement.

## T. REPORTING CRIMINAL CHARGES OR DISPOSITIONS AND MISCONDUCT RELATED TO THE CENTER'S PROCESS

An adult Participant who learns of information or reasonably suspects that a Participant either (i) is subject to a criminal charge(s) or disposition(s) involving sexual misconduct or misconduct involving Minors; or (ii) has committed misconduct related to the Center's process, including Aiding and Abetting or Abuse of Process (as those terms are defined in the Code), or has engaged in Retaliation (as defined in the Code), must immediately:

- Make a report to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.
- An adult Participant may make a report to USRowing, but a report to USRowing alone is not sufficient and will not satisfy the reporter's reporting obligations. All such reports received by USRowing will be forwarded to the Center.

## U. REPORTING OTHER MISCONDUCT

For reporting any other Prohibited Conduct and misconduct, USRowing will take a report in the way that is most comfortable for the person initiating the report including an anonymous, in-person, verbal, or written report. Regardless of the method of reporting, it is helpful to USRowing to get the following information:

- The name of the Claimant(s)
- The type of misconduct alleged
- The name(s) of the alleged victims(s)

- The name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct.

Individuals may report non-sexual misconduct, including violations of the Minor Athletes Abuse Prevention Policies, to USRowing by completing an Incident Report Form. Required information on this form will include:

- The name(s) of the Claimant(s)
- The type of misconduct alleged
- The name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct
- The approximate date(s) and location(s) where the misconduct was committed
- The names of other individuals who might have information regarding the alleged misconduct
- A summary statement of the reasons to believe that misconduct has occurred

A copy of the USRowing Incident Report form can be found [here](#).

## V. CONFIDENTIALITY & ANONYMOUS REPORTING

**a) Confidentiality:** To the extent permitted by law, and as appropriate, USRowing will handle any report it receives privately and discreetly and will not make public the names of the Claimant(s), potential victim(s), or accused person(s); however, USRowing may disclose such names on a limited basis when conducting an investigation, reporting the allegations to a Member Organization, reporting to the Center, or reporting to law enforcement authorities.

**Anonymous Reporting:** USRowing recognizes that it can be difficult to report an allegation of misconduct and strives to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible. Anonymous reports may be made without the formality of completing an Incident Report Form by:

- Completing (without including a name) an Incident Report Form found [here](#)
- Expressing concerns of misconduct to USRowing directly
- Expressing concerns to the Safeguarding Team at [USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org](mailto:USRowingSafeSport@usrowing.org)

Please be aware that an anonymous report does not mean that the underlying information will be protected. However, an anonymous report may limit the USRowing's ability to investigate and respond to a report, and if an Adult Participant reports anonymously, it may not be possible for the USRowing to verify that mandatory reporting obligations have been satisfied.

## W. HOW REPORTS ARE HANDLED

Upon a report or other notice of credible information or allegations that a Participant:

1. may have engaged in actual or suspected child abuse, USRowing will report the same to the Center and law enforcement;
2. may have committed sexual misconduct, USRowing will report the same to the Center;
3. may either:
  - a. be subject to a criminal charge(s) or disposition(s) involving sexual misconduct or misconduct involving Minors; or
  - b. have committed misconduct related to the Center's process, including Aiding and Abetting or Abuse of Process (as those terms are defined in the Code), or has engaged in Retaliation (as defined in the Code); then
  - c. USRowing will report the same to the Center;
4. may have:

- a. committed prohibited conduct at an Olympic & Paralympic Training Center or USOPC Delegation Event, USRowing will report the same to the USOPC's Security & Athlete Safety Office;
- 5. may either:
  - a. be subject to a criminal charge(s) or disposition(s) involving emotional or physical misconduct or other prohibited conduct under the Code not otherwise covered under (3)(a), above;
  - b. have committed physical misconduct, emotional misconduct, harassment, hazing or bullying as defined by the Code, not covered above;
  - c. violated any other of the provisions of the USRowing Athlete and Participant Safety Policy or the Code, not covered above; or
  - d. committed any of the violations in (1), (2), or (3) above, and jurisdiction has been declined by the Center; then
  - e. USRowing shall initiate its response and resolution proceedings.

If an allegation of prohibited conduct occurs at an OPTC or USOPC Delegation Event, notification must be sent to the USOPC's Security & Athlete Safety Office. In addition, notification of any temporary measure(s) (imposed or removed) affecting Participants who might or will be attending a USOPC Delegation Event, have access to an OPTC, or receive a benefit and/or service from the USOPC, must also be reported to the USOPC's Security & Athlete Safety Office.

**Misconduct and Policy Violations:** Member Organizations will address any alleged violations of this Policy and/or the Member Organization's own SafeSport Policy that is reported to the Member Organization, referred to the Member Organization by USRowing, or of which the Member Organization otherwise becomes aware.

Member Organizations are empowered to, and shall, respond to and resolve reported allegations of abuse and misconduct using the Member Organization's internal existing policies and processes if the reported incidents do not rise to the level of the Center's exclusive jurisdiction. In each SafeSport allegation, USRowing retains the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to assert jurisdiction over the SafeSport allegation at any time. Each Member Organization will submit its response and resolution to alleged violations of misconduct to USRowing through [this link](#) within 21 days of receiving notification of the alleged misconduct, unless a modified timeline is mutually agreed upon by USRowing and the Member Organization.

**Notification:** Following USRowing's receipt of an allegation involving SafeSport-related prohibited conduct, USRowing may consider the circumstances in which it will notify those parties or organizations with a need to know, so that the outcome can be properly effectuated and/or understood.

USRowing designates the Safeguarding Associate or in their absence, a member of the internal Safeguarding Team to respond to requests from the Center within 72 hours regarding the eligibility of a Participant, and the existence of USRowing-imposed Temporary Measures or safety plans.

## RESPONDING TO ABUSE OR MISCONDUCT

This Section addresses USRowing's role where there is an allegation of misconduct, as defined in this Policy, over which the Center does not take jurisdiction.

### X. DISCIPLINARY RULES

On receipt of an allegation, USRowing will determine in its discretion the appropriate steps to address the conduct, including but not limited to imposing Temporary Measures pending the outcome of an investigation. USRowing will address allegations against a staff member and/or volunteer under relevant organizational policies.

USRowing's disciplinary response will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident and can include summary dismissal. USRowing may undertake a formal investigation and hearing at its discretion. If the Respondent is a Minor, USRowing will first contact his or her parents or guardians if possible.

## **Y. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Sanctions for violations of the Policy will be proportionate and reasonable under the circumstances. USRowing may take the following disciplinary actions, without limitation:

- Inform the Respondent's direct supervisor, or, in the case of a Minor, the Minor's parent or guardian
- Provide the Respondent with guidance, redirection, and instruction
- File a formal incident report
- Orally issue a warning
- Issue a written warning
- Limit an individual's access to certain buildings, boathouses, competitions, or people
- Provide informed supervision, where at least one staff member is informed of the allegation and is instructed to supervise the Respondent
- Engage in restorative and educational practices
- Suspend or terminate employment or membership
- Deem a Member Organization non-compliant and ineligible to participate in USRowing activities (hosted/sanctioned regattas, etc.)
- Rescind a Member Organization's current Member Organization Membership and/or deny Member Organization renewal rights
- Any other disciplinary action that USRowing reasonably deems necessary or appropriate under the circumstances

## **Z. ONGOING EMPLOYMENT & PARTICIPATION**

Upon receipt of a credible and specific allegation of child abuse, serious misconduct, or any other violation of this Policy, USRowing may immediately suspend, terminate, or limit the Respondent's membership, participation, or employment (if with USRowing) as a means to ensure participant safety.

## **AA. NO RETALIATION**

USRowing will not tolerate attempts from any individual to retaliate, punish, or in any way harm any individual who reports a concern in good faith. Any action to the contrary will be considered a violation of this Policy and grounds for disciplinary action by USRowing.

## **BB. BAD FAITH ALLEGATIONS**

Any allegation of misconduct under this Policy that is determined to be frivolous, fraudulent, or otherwise made in bad faith, will be considered a violation of the Policy itself. Such reports may also be subject to criminal prosecution and/or civil proceedings.

# **INVESTIGATION & ADJUDICATION OF REPORTS OF ABUSE OR MISCONDUCT**

## **CC. INVESTIGATIONS**

As appropriate, and at its discretion, USRowing may institute formal investigations and hearings to address serious allegations of misconduct under this Policy. Such investigations will be undertaken to address only the most serious allegations and patterns of behavior that may warrant significant sanctions.

Where an investigation under this Policy is conducted by USRowing, the Respondent, Claimant, and/or accused shall have the right to:

- Receive written notice of the report or complaint, including a statement of the allegations (redacted as appropriate)
- A victims advocate and/or support person
- Present relevant information to the investigator(s)
- Legal counsel, at their own expense

The Chief of Sport is responsible for ensuring the response and resolution Policy is being followed.

USRowing may pause an investigation if requested to do so in writing by law enforcement.

## DD. HEARINGS

**Procedural Safeguards:** Any disciplinary hearing undertaken pursuant to this Policy shall be conducted in accordance with USRowing's Grievance Procedures, found [here](#). Any incurred costs do not apply to SafeSport complaint filings.

**Preliminary Actions:** Upon a determination that a credible allegation of misconduct exists, and if the Chief of Sport determines, in their sole discretion, that the allegations of the Respondent's misconduct pose a risk to USRowing activities, interim measures may be imposed prior to the completion of any disciplinary hearing.

**Notice:** The Respondent will be notified of a specific date and time to ensure that they are available for the hearing. Unless the Grievance Panel (as defined in the Grievance Procedures) requires the individual to attend the hearing in person, the Respondent may appear by video conference or conference call. The Respondent has the right to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing.

**Timing:** The Grievance Panel shall have the authority to set practical rules (e.g., timing and conduct of the hearing) as it deems necessary. At the request of the Respondent or USRowing, and if necessary, to expedite the proceeding to resolve a matter relating to a scheduled training or competition, the Grievance Panel may render an expedited determination.

- If the complainant is a Minor, the investigator's report may substitute for the Minor witness' direct testimony, provided that the Respondent has an opportunity to respond to such testimony and receives a copy of the same in advance of the hearing.
- The Grievance Panel may proceed in the Respondent's absence if it cannot locate the individual, or if the individual declines to attend the hearing.

**Findings and Sanctions:** The Panel has the discretion to impose sanctions on the Respondent if it finds, based on a preponderance of the evidence that misconduct has occurred. The Panel will communicate its findings to the Respondent. The Grievance Panel may impose sanctions on the Respondent in its findings. Any sanctions imposed by the Grievance Panel against the individual must be proportionate and reasonable, relative to the conduct that is found to have occurred. The decision regarding the appropriate sanction shall be up to the panel deciding each complaint. In imposing a sanction, the Grievance Panel shall consider, among other things:

- The legitimate interests of USRowing in providing a safe environment for its participants
- The seriousness of the offense or act alleged
- The age of the accused individual and victim when the offense or act occurred

- Any information produced by the Respondent, or produced on behalf of the Respondent, regarding the Respondent's rehabilitation and good conduct
- The effect on USRowing's reputation
- Whether the individual poses an ongoing concern for the safety of USRowing's athletes and participants
- Any other information, which in the determination of the Grievance Panel, bears on the appropriate sanction

Sanctions may range from a warning or a reprimand to suspension from sport involvement with USRowing for a period of time or permanently.

For the purposes of this Policy, a suspension from sport involvement shall mean that the Respondent may not participate in any capacity or in any role in the business, events or activities of USRowing or its affiliated members for the duration of the period of suspension.

**Confidentiality:** The conduct of the hearing will be private. If the Grievance Panel determines that the individual has violated Policy, it may publish its decision or a summary of its decision, unless the accused is a Minor. However, if the individual appeals, the summary of the Panel's decision will not be disclosed until an appellate decision has been made. If the Grievance Panel determines the accused individual did not violate the relevant Policy, the Grievance Panel will publish a summary only at the individual's written request.

## ENFORCEMENT

The enforcement of this Policy falls under the jurisdiction of USRowing, except where the Center has taken jurisdiction of the allegations.

USRowing and its Member Organizations shall recognize and enforce all Temporary Measures and final sanctions imposed by the Center, including lifetime bans.

Member Organizations shall also recognize and enforce all Temporary Measures and final sanctions imposed by USRowing.

If a USRowing 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.

No individual who is an employee, contractor, or agent of USRowing may assist a member or former member of USRowing in obtaining a new job (excluding the routine transmission of administrative or personnel files) if the individual knows that the member or former member (a) violated the policies or procedures of the Center related to sexual misconduct; and/or (b) was convicted of a crime involving sexual misconduct with a Minor in violation of applicable law.

## EE. DATA OF MATTERS ADDRESSED BY USROWING

USRowing must annually submit to the Center data regarding:

- a) Reports of emotional or physical misconduct made to USRowing or its Member Organizations (if known) Total reported incidents of alleged emotional misconduct
- b) Total reported incidents of alleged physical misconduct
- c) Total number of investigations of alleged emotional misconduct
- d) Total number of investigations of alleged physical misconduct
- e) Total number of violations for emotional misconduct adjudicated by USRowing, separated by cases adjudicated by USRowing and cases adjudicated by its Member Organizations
- f) Total number of violations for physical misconduct adjudicated by USRowing, separated by cases adjudicated by USRowing and cases adjudicated by its Member Organizations

Reports to USRowing or its Member Organizations that a Participant violated the MAAPP

- a) Total reported incidents of alleged violations of the MAAPP
- b) Total number of investigations of alleged violations of the MAAPP
- c) Total number of violations of the MAAPP, separated by cases adjudicated by USRowing and cases adjudicated by its Member Organizations
- d) Reports to USRowing or its Member Organizations that a Participant engaged in retaliation
- e) Total reported incidents of alleged retaliation
- f) Total number of investigations of alleged retaliation
- g) Total number of violations of retaliation separated by cases adjudicated by USRowing and its Member Organizations

USRowing is required to collect this information from its Member Organizations. On a quarterly basis, Member Organizations are required to complete an online survey to document the data of matters (listed above) that were reported and managed by the Member Organization during the specified time period. When a Member Organization obtains jurisdiction over an allegation, the Member Organization must inform USRowing how the allegations were responded to and the respective outcome.

## APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL USOPC SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Any temporary measure(s) imposed by USRowing and/or the U.S. Center for SafeSport in response to an allegation must be included in the required notification (as described in the following section).

This notification requirement is in addition to any other requirement to report an allegation to the Center and/or law enforcement. Any such notifications shall be submitted by email to [athlete.safety@usopc.org](mailto:athlete.safety@usopc.org).

### Sanctions and Temporary Measures

USRowing must notify the USOPC's Security & Athlete Safety Office as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours of imposing its own or being notified of Center-imposed sanction(s) and/or temporary measure(s), affecting Participants who USRowing knows, or reasonably expects, to:

- be nominated for or selected as a Participant to a USOPC Delegation Event,
- be a Participant at a USOPC Sponsored Event,
- have access to an OPTC, and/or
- receive a benefit and/or service from the USOPC as outlined in the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy.

As well, the USOPC Security & Athlete Safety Office should also be notified in the event of any change or removal of any such sanction and/or temporary measure(s) within 24 hours of such change by the USRowing or notification of a change or removal by the Center. Any such notifications shall be submitted by email to [athlete.safety@usopc.org](mailto:athlete.safety@usopc.org).

## **Jurisdiction**

### *USOPC Assertion of Jurisdiction*

The USOPC will assert jurisdiction over any alleged incident of Prohibited Conduct which is reported to have occurred at an OPTC, USOPC Sponsored Event, or a USOPC Delegation Event where the Center has not exercised exclusive or discretionary jurisdiction, and over matters the Center refers to the USOPC. In limited circumstances, the USOPC may elect, in its sole and absolute discretion, to refer the incident and jurisdiction thereof to USRowing.

### *Applicable Policies and Procedures*

The USOPC Athlete Safety Policy shall apply and will govern the response and resolution of any allegation for which the USOPC asserts jurisdiction. In instances when the USOPC declines jurisdiction, USRowing shall be responsible for the response and resolution of the allegation according to its own policies and procedures.