



2024

# SAFE SPORT GUIDEBOOK

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# Introduction

Welcome to the USA Youth Education in Shooting Sports (USAYESS) Safe Sport Guidebook. This essential resource is designed to uphold our unwavering commitment to ensuring a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all our members. At USAYESS, we believe every athlete deserves a secure space to train, compete, and thrive—whether they are mastering fundamental skills or representing our organization on the national or international stage.

Shooting sports, like any competitive field, presents unique challenges and risks. Unfortunately, youth sports can also be a high-risk environment for the abuse of minor athletes. It is imperative that we actively guard against any form of abuse that can jeopardize an athlete's safety and well-being. Abuse in any form is unacceptable and can have serious, long-lasting effects on an athlete's mental health, self-esteem, and overall experience in the sport. These negative impacts can hinder performance and, in some cases, drive athletes away from the sport altogether. It's hard to disagree when we see a young athlete's eyes light up, charged by the satisfaction of a goal reached, a friend made.

Fortunately, it's easy to take meaningful steps to keep this light from dimming. By learning essential principles and practices for preventing and addressing inappropriate activity that may occur in active settings, you can be an informed ally and champion of our athlete's well-being in your community.

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent nonprofit organization responsible for responding to and preventing emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct and abuse in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement and for all amateur sports.

In alignment with the highest standards of safety, the U.S. Center for SafeSport (Center) serves as the official authority on safe sport practices in the United States. Recognized by the U.S. Congress and USAYESS, the Center has established the SafeSport Code, which all participants must adhere to. The SafeSport Code outlines specific standards of behavior and provides a framework for addressing violations. All participants must understand and comply with the SafeSport Code and our USAYESS SafeSport Policy.

Additionally, our policy is aligned with the SafeSport Act of 2017, which mandates strict adherence to safety protocols and reporting requirements. Any reasonable suspicion of child abuse, including sexual abuse, must be reported to law enforcement immediately. Note: Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to require a victim of child abuse or other misconduct to report abuse themselves.

The safety and integrity of our athletes depend on the collective effort of everyone involved—athletes, parents, coaches, officials, administrators, and club members. Understanding and implementing the guidelines in this guidebook are essential to creating a safe and positive environment for everyone involved. Our SafeSport Policy outlines our commitment through mandatory reporting requirements, clear definitions of misconduct, and preventive measures for interactions between adult participants and minor athletes. USAYESS reserves the right to update this policy as needed, with changes taking effect immediately upon publication.

Thank you for your dedication to maintaining a safe and supportive atmosphere within USAYESS. Together, we can foster a sport environment where every participant can excel and feel protected.

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# Definitions

The definitions below apply to all sections of this Policy. For any definitions not included herein but contained in the Code, the Code definitions are adopted as if they are fully set forth herein. The definitions below are intended to provide clarity. Many terms are defined under federal law or within the U.S. Center for SafeSport's policies. In other cases, USAYESS uses specifically defined terms that it believes are necessary for its member's guidance. Team and club leaders must use these definitions to build their athlete safety handbook.

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

1. A member of USAYESS, USAYESS State Associations, and USAYESS member clubs;
2. An employee or board member of USAYESS, USAYESS State Association, and USAYESS member clubs;
3. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USAYESS, USAYESS State Association, and USAYESS member clubs;
4. Authorized, approved, or appointed by USAYESS, USAYESS State Association, and USAYESS member clubs to have regular contact with or authority over Minor Athletes.

**Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant (PCA)** is defined as an Adult Participant who assists an 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/legal guardian annually.

For a PCA to be considered an Adult Participant, the PCA must have Regular Contact with additional Minor Athlete(s) besides the Minor Athlete for whom they provide care, or the PCA must be hired by an Organization.

**Authority Over** is defined as one person's position over another person 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.

**Center or the Center or USCSS** means the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Under the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, the Center develops resources and policies to safeguard athletes from bullying, harassment, hazing, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct. The law entrusts the Center as the exclusive authority to respond to reports of allegations of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct within the United States. Federal law requires the Center to conduct regular and random audits of USAYESS to ensure compliance with these policies.

**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** has the meaning established under relevant state or federal law. The federal definition of Child Abuse must be considered at all times and is defined by the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990. Abuse may also be defined by the law of the state in which the behavior occurs.

**Claimant** is the person who is alleged to have experienced conduct that constitutes a SafeSport Code policy violation. The claimant will include any parent or guardian of a Minor.

**Close-in-age Exception** is defined as 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 than the Minor Athlete (e.g., a 19-year-old and a 16-year old). Note: this exception only applies within the prevention policies and not regarding conduct defined in the SafeSport Code.

**Coach, Assistant Coach, Trainer, or Volunteer** is a person who is authorized to instruct or train athletes based on supervision, evaluation or other authority over that athlete. The SafeSport Code states that once a Coach-Athlete relationship is established, a Power Imbalance is presumed to exist throughout the relationship, regardless of age.

**Code or SafeSport Code** refers to the SafeSport Code.

**Dual Relationship** is defined as an exception applicable to certain policies when an Adult Participant has a dual role or relationship with a Minor Athlete and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent at least annually authorizing the exception.

**Event** as defined by the Protecting Young Victims and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017, includes any of the following activities sanctioned by USAYESS, USAYESS State Associations, and USAYESS member clubs, or related to those activities:

1. Travel;
2. Lodging;
3. Coaching;
4. Mentoring;
5. Training (practice);
6. Competition;Mental health or medical treatment.

**Familial Dual Relationship** is a relationship between family members where the person in position of authority over a Minor Athlete is considered immediate family such as parent, grandparent, sibling or in-law or related by blood such as an uncle or aunt.

**Federal Child Abuse Definitions.** Covered individuals must comply with federal Child Abuse reporting standards. Terms relevant to those standards include:

1. “Child Abuse” means the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment of a child;
2. “Physical injury” includes but is not limited to lacerations, fractured bones, burns, internal injuries, severe bruising or serious bodily harm;
3. “Mental injury” means harm to a child’s psychological or intellectual functioning, which may be exhibited by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal or outward aggressive behavior, or a combination of those behaviors;
4. “Sexual abuse” includes the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of a child to engage in, or assist another person to engage in, sexually explicit conduct or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children;
5. “Sexually explicit conduct” refers to actual or simulated sexual conduct;
6. “Exploitation” means child pornography or child prostitution;
7. “Negligent treatment” means the failure to provide, for reasons other than poverty, adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.

**In-Program Contact** constitutes any contact (including communications, interactions, or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in shooting sports. USAYESS does not allow any other interactions except for In-Program Contact.

**Jurisdiction** is the ability to enforce applicable policies including USAYESS Code of Ethical Conduct, bylaws, governance of USAYESS, the policies of the U.S. Center for SafeSport and/or the SafeSport Code.

**Local Affiliated Organization (LAO)** is a regional, state, or local club or organization that is directly affiliated with USAYESS or that is affiliated with a regional or state affiliate of USAYESS.

**Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)** is a collection of proactive prevention and training policies for USAYESS. The MAAPP address training requirements and limiting one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes.

**Member** is anyone who has agreed to terms of membership or who has a USAYESS membership.

**Member Club** is any Club Member or Team of USAYESS.

**Minor** is defined by the SafeSport Code as “an individual who is, or is perceived by the Respondent to be, under the age of 18.”

**Minor Athlete** or **Youth Athlete** is An Amateur Athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USAYESS.



**Out of Program Contact** is any one-on-one contact between an Adult Participant and Minor Athlete unrelated to In-Program shooting sports activities or events. (i.e., trips, meals, or gifts without any direct correlation to shooting sports activities).

**Participant** is any person who is seeking to be, currently is, or was a member of USAYESS; any person who is a “Covered Individual” under the Protecting Young Victim’s Act and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017; or any person who is a “Participant” under the Code. This includes, but is not limited to, the following persons:

1. All non-member employees of Member Clubs.
2. All members of USAYESS committees or task forces.
3. All USAYESS employees and Directors.
4. All adults, including volunteers and judges, authorized by USAYESS or any Member of USAYESS to interact with athletes.

**Power Imbalance** as defined by the SafeSport Code exists where, “based on the totality of the circumstances, one person has supervisory, evaluative, or other authority over another.” A Power Imbalance is presumed to exist through the duration of a Coach-Athlete relationship.

**Regular contact** is defined as ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any Minor Athlete. USAYESS Safe Sport will interpret regular contact with a minor athlete if it is within a USAYESS Member Club, regardless of role or USAYESS Membership status.

**Reporter or Reporting Party** is a person who files a grievance or similar report with USAYESS.

**Respondent** is a Participant who is alleged to have violated the SafeSport Code or other USAYESS policy.

**SafeSport** refers to any designation when the two words “Safe” and “Sport” are combined, the reference is to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

**Safe Sport** refers to USAYESS “Safe Sport” when the two words are separated.

**Safe Sport Authorization Act** shall refer to the “Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017.”

**Safe Sport Violation** is an action that constitutes one or more of the following:

1. Prohibited Conduct, as outlined in the SafeSport Code;
2. Prohibited Conduct, misconduct or prevention policy violations of the USAYESS Safe Sport Policy;
3. Any similar conduct violating current or previous standards promulgated by the U.S. Center for SafeSport (herein “the Center”), or USAYESS at the time of the conduct; or
4. Any conduct that would violate similar community standards existing at the time of the alleged conduct, including then applicable criminal and/or civil laws.

# Jurisdiction

## THE U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT: EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION

The Center has the exclusive jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations that a Participant engaged in one or more of the following:

1. Sexual Misconduct, including without limitation child sexual abuse and any misconduct that is reasonably related to an underlying allegation of Sexual Misconduct;
2. Criminal Charges or Dispositions involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
3. Misconduct Related to Reporting, where the underlying allegation involves Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct;
4. Aiding and Abetting, when it relates to the Center's process;
5. Misconduct Related to the Center's Process;
6. Other Inappropriate Conduct, as defined in the Code.

## USAYESS JURISDICTION

USAYESS has jurisdiction and the Center has discretionary jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations that a Participant engaged in one or more of the following:

1. Non-sexual Child Abuse;
2. Emotional and physical misconduct, including stalking, bullying behaviors, hazing, and harassment;
3. Criminal Charges or Dispositions not involving Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct; and
4. USAYESS Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) or other similar Proactive Policy violations.

USAYESS may, at any point before a matter is final, impose temporary measures<sup>1</sup>. Generally, temporary measures are implemented based on the severity of the allegations, the evidentiary support for the allegations, and/or the perceived risk to athletes or the sport community. When the allegations involve child sexual abuse, the age of those allegations is not relevant to this determination.

Temporary measures may include, but are not limited to, altering training schedules, providing or requiring chaperones, implementing contact limitations, implementing measures prohibiting one-on-one interactions, and suspensions from participation in some or all aspects of sport activity. If measures require monitoring or chaperoning, the Respondent may be required to locate, arrange and/or pay for some or all those services as a condition of continued participation pending completion of the investigation.

A temporary measure shall be effective immediately upon notice, unless stated otherwise. Temporary measure(s) will remain in effect until expressly removed.

If the Center accepts discretionary jurisdiction over allegations, it will use the resolution procedures set for in the Code.

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<sup>1</sup> For sexual misconduct allegations, USAYESS may impose temporary measures, including temporary suspensions prior to the Center formally accepting jurisdiction over the reported allegations.

# Prohibited Conduct

All Participants, as defined above, are bound by and must comply with this Policy and the Code. USAYESS hereby incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein, the definitions of Prohibited Conduct from 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 USAYESS licensed and sanctioned activities is a privilege, not a right, and 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 in the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it.

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to engage in or tolerate: (1) Prohibited Conduct; (2) any conduct that would violate any current or previous Center or USAYESS standards analogous to Prohibited Conduct that existed at the time of the alleged conduct; or (3) 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.

USAYESS formally adopts the definitions of Prohibited Conduct contained in the current Code, effective August 1, 2021, and set forth below. Any changes to the Code's categories and definitions of misconduct are immediately adopted by USAYESS and effective upon the Center's publication unless otherwise noted. It should be noted that criminal charges and dispositions may be defined differently for purposes of background check policy.

Prohibited conduct includes:

1. Criminal Charge or Disposition
2. Child Abuse
3. Sexual Misconduct<sup>2</sup>
4. Emotional and Physical Misconduct, including Stalking, Bullying,
5. Hazing and Harassment
6. Aiding and Abetting
7. Misconduct Related to Reporting
8. Other Inappropriate Conduct
9. Violation of USAYESS Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies/Proactive Policies

## **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 irrelevant to whether a violation of this Policy occurred but may be considered for sanctioning purposes.

### **Definitions**

- **Criminal Disposition** - It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to be or have 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.
- **Criminal Charges, including Warrant for Arrest** - It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to have any pending criminal charge(s) or warrant(s) for arrest. When assessing whether conduct constitutes a Criminal Charge or Disposition, USAYESS may assess and rely upon the original charges, amended charges, or those to which a plea was entered.

## **SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY**

A Participant on any state, federal, territorial, or tribal sex offender registry is ineligible to participate.

## **US CENTER FOR SAFESPORT CENTRALIZED DISCIPLINARY DATABASE**

A Participant on US Center for SafeSport Centralized Disciplinary Database is ineligible to participate.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to engage in Child Abuse.

## **EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT**

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to engage in emotional and/ or physical misconduct when that misconduct occurs within a context that is reasonably related to sport, which includes, without limitation:

1. Emotional Misconduct
2. Physical Misconduct
3. Bullying Behaviors
4. Hazing
5. Harassment

## EMOTIONAL MISCONDUCT

Emotional Misconduct includes (a) Verbal Acts, (b) Physical Acts, (c) Acts that Deny Attention or Support, (d) Criminal Conduct, and/or (e) Stalking. Emotional Misconduct is determined by the objective behaviors, not whether harm is intended or results from the behavior.

- **Verbal Acts** - Repeatedly and excessively verbally assaulting or attacking someone personally in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.
- **Physical Acts** - Repeated and/or severe physically aggressive behaviors, including but not limited to throwing sports equipment, water bottles, or chairs at or in the presence of others, punching walls, windows, or other objects.
- **Acts that Deny Attention or Support** - Ignoring or isolating a person for extended periods, including routinely or arbitrarily excluding a Participant from practice.
- **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).
- **Stalking** - Stalking occurs 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:
  1. Fear for their safety.
  2. The safety of a third person.
  3. To experience substantial emotional distress.

“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.

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.

- **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 the sport and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of the Participant’s participation.

## PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT

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

- **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.
- **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 nonprescribed medications to another.
- **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).
- **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 swimming. Physical Misconduct also does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of the Participant's participation.

## BULLYING BEHAVIOR

Repeated and/or severe behavior(s) that are (a) aggressive, (b) directed at a Minor, and (c) intended or likely to hurt, control, or diminish the Minor emotionally, physically, or sexually. Bullying-like behaviors directed at adults are addressed under other forms of misconduct, such as Hazing and/or Harassment.

Examples of bullying behavior may include, without limitation, repeated and/or severe:

- **Physical** - Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, strangling, spitting or slapping, or throwing objects (such as sporting equipment) at another person.
- **Verbal** - Ridiculing, taunting, name-calling, intimidating, or threatening to cause someone harm.
- **Social Media, including Cyberbullying** - 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.

- **Criminal Conduct** - Bullying Behavior includes any conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.
- **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.

## **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:

- **Contact Acts** - Tying, taping, or otherwise physically restraining another person; beating, paddling, or other forms of physical assault.
- **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., wearing inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (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.
- **Criminal Acts** - Any act or conduct that constitutes hazing under applicable federal or state law.
- **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 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.

## **HARASSMENT**

Repeated and/or severe conduct that:

1. Causes fear, humiliation, or annoyance.
2. Offends or degrades.
3. Creates a hostile environment (as defined above).
4. 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. Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law. Whether the conduct is harassing depends on the totality of the circumstances, including the nature, frequency, intensity, location, context, and duration of the behavior.
5. 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 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.

## **AIDING AND ABETTING**

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

1. Allowing any person who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by USAYESS to be in any way associated with or employed by an organization affiliated with or holding itself out as affiliated with USAYESS;
2. Allowing any person who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by USAYESS to coach or instruct Participants;
3. Allowing anyone identified as ineligible by USAYESS 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 USAYESS.
4. Providing any coaching-related advice or service to an Athlete identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by USAYESS.
5. Allowing any person to violate the terms of their suspension or any other sanctions imposed by USAYESS.

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, or Advisor of a Participant, including Minor Participants, engages in Aiding or Abetting.



## **INTENTIONALLY FILING A FALSE ALLEGATION**

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

1. An allegation is false if the events reported did not occur and the person making the report knows the events did not happen.
2. A false allegation differs from an unsubstantiated allegation; an unsubstantiated allegation means 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.

## **MINOR ATHLETES ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES. PROACTIVE POLICIES**

It is a violation of this Policy for a Participant to violate any provision of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies or other proactive policies adopted by USAYESS. Proactive policies set standards for professional boundaries, minimize the appearance of impropriety, prevent boundary violations, and prohibit grooming tactics<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> “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.

# Reporting

## RETALIATION

Retaliation is any adverse action a Participant takes against a person participating in USAYESS proceedings.

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

Retaliation does not include good-faith actions lawfully pursued in response to the report of a USAYESS Policy violation.

## REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT – USCENTERFORSAFESPORT.ORG

All reports of sexual misconduct must be reported directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport at [www.uscenterforsafesport.org](http://www.uscenterforsafesport.org) or 720-531-0340. No statutes of limitation apply to reports of incidents of sexual misconduct.

All reports of sexual misconduct received by USAYESS 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 or other appropriate authorities consistent with federal law.

## REPORTING NON-SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

For reporting any non-sexual misconduct, USAYESS will take a report in the most comfortable way 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 USAYESS to get the following information:

1. The name of the claimant(s);
2. The type of misconduct alleged;
3. The name(s) of the alleged victim(s); and
4. The name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct.

Individuals may complete an Incident Report Form. Information on this form will include:

1. The name(s) of the claimant(s);
2. The type of misconduct alleged;
3. The name(s) of the alleged victim(s);
4. The name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct;
5. The approximate date(s) and location(s) where the misconduct was committed;
6. The names of other individuals who might have information regarding the alleged misconduct; and
7. A summary statement of the reasons for believing that misconduct has occurred

Except for mandatory reporting to the authorities and the Center, USAYESS will withhold the claimant's name upon request, to the extent permitted by law. A copy of the USAYESS Incident Report Form can be found at <https://www.usayess.org/safe-sport/reporting>.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMOUS REPORTING**

**i. Confidentiality** -To the extent permitted by law, and as appropriate, USAYESS will handle any report it receives confidentially and discretely and will not make public the names of the claimant(s), potential victim(s), or accused person(s); however, USAYESS may disclose such names on a limited basis when conducting an investigation, or reporting to the Center, or reporting to law enforcement authorities.

**ii. Anonymous Reporting** – USAYESS recognizes 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:

1. by completing the Incident Report Form without including their name;
2. by expressing concerns of misconduct to USAYESS

Anonymous reporting may make it difficult to investigate or properly address allegations.

## **HOW REPORTS ARE HANDLED**

### **Suspicious or Allegations of Child Physical or Sexual Abuse Reported to Law Enforcement and/or Child Protective Services**

- I. All allegations of child physical or sexual abuse will be reported to law enforcement authorities and the Center. USAYESS does not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities. However, USAYESS may ask a few clarifying questions of the person making the report to report the suspicion or allegation to law enforcement authorities adequately.

### **Misconduct and Policy Violations**

- II. USAYESS will address all alleged violations of this Policy.

### **Notification**

- III. Following USAYESS's receipt of an allegation involving Safe Sport-related prohibited conduct, USAYESS may consider the circumstances in which it will notify other parents of athletes with whom the accused individual may have had contact. At USAYESS's discretion, and as appropriate or required by the Center, USAYESS may notify relevant persons, i.e., competition managers, staff members, contractors, volunteers, parents, and/or athletes of any such allegation that (a) law enforcement authorities are actively investigating; or (b) that the Center is investigating. Advising others of an allegation may lead to additional reports of child physical or sexual abuse and other prohibited conduct.

# Background Check

All USAYESS Designees defined above, 18 years of age and older, shall undergo a background check that complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Through this background check, USAYESS will utilize reasonable efforts to ascertain criminal history. The USAYESS Background Check Policy assists USAYESS in promoting the safety and welfare of athletes.

The background check must be completed before regular contact with any Minor, as defined in Section II, or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this Policy.

Background checks will be refreshed annually.

## PROCESS

The Background Check Consent and Waiver Release Form must be submitted to USAYESS's third-party background check vendor, and the USAYESS Designee must be cleared before performing any services for USAYESS. Upon submission of the Background Check Consent and Waiver Release Form, USAYESS will request that its vendor perform the background check. As part of its background check, the vendor will run a full background screen that includes at least the following search components below.

### Full Background Check

1. Social Security Number validation<sup>1</sup>;
2. Name and address history records;
3. Two independent Multi-Jurisdictional Criminal Database searches covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
4. County Criminal Records for each name used and county where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past five years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable for each county searched;
5. Two independent National Sex Offender Registry database searches of all available states, plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
6. Multiple National Watch Lists

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<sup>1</sup> Or suitable alternative identification verification process as determined by the background check vendor.

## CRIMINAL HISTORY

Any background check that results in a report of a disposition or resolution of a criminal proceeding, other than an adjudication of not guilty<sup>1</sup>, for any of the below criminal offenses, will be subject to USAYESS policies and procedures to determine the individual's level of access and involvement:

1. Any felony<sup>2</sup>
2. Any misdemeanor involving:
3. All sexual crimes, criminal offenses of a sexual nature, including but not limited to; rape, child molestation, sexual battery, lewd conduct, possession and distribution of child pornography, possession and distribution of obscene material, prostitution, indecent exposure, public indecency, and any sex offender registrant<sup>3</sup>;
4. Any drug-related offenses
5. Harm to a minor and vulnerable person, including, but not limited to, offenses such as child abandonment, child endangerment/ neglect/abuse, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and DUI with a minor
6. Violence against a person (including crimes involving firearms and domestic violence)
7. Stalking, harassment, blackmail, violation of a protection order, and/or threats;
8. Destruction of property, including arson, vandalism, and criminal mischief; and
9. Animal abuse or neglect

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1 A "disposition or resolution of a criminal proceeding, other than an adjudication of not guilty" shall include, but is 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, or the existence of an ongoing criminal investigation, a warrant for arrest, or any pending charges.

2 For purposes of these procedures, the term "felony" shall refer to any criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for more than one year.

3 Any participant that has been convicted of, received an imposition of a deferred sentence for, or any plea of guilty or no contest for any sexual crime, criminal offense of a sexual nature, and/or is a sex offender registrant must be reported.

## **FULL DISCLOSURE**

Each USAYESS Designee and prospective USAYESS Designee has the affirmative duty to disclose their criminal history. Failing to disclose or intentionally misrepresent an arrest, plea, or conviction is grounds for USAYESS Designee status revocation or restriction, regardless of when the offense is discovered. USAYESS Designees have the ongoing duty to disclose criminal history. USAYESS Designees need not disclose arrests in which charges are not filed, charges are dismissed, or the USAYESS Designee is acquitted; however, USAYESS Designees are required to disclose non-convictions involving deferred sentences, deferred adjudications, or other similar dispositions as well as accusations, arrests, indictments, or convictions of a criminal offense set out above or a criminal offense against a child.

1. If a prospective USAYESS Designee has been or (1) is accused, (2) arrested, (3) charged, (4) indicted, (5) has an adjudication other than not guilty, or (5) is convicted of any offense identified above during the application process, he is required to disclose such information immediately.
2. In the event a USAYESS Designee has been or is (1) accused, (2) arrested, (3) charged, (4) indicted, (5) has an adjudication other than not guilty, or (5) is convicted of any offense identified above during the application process, he is required to disclose such information immediately to Brian Beard, USAYESS President, at [brian@usayess.org](mailto:brian@usayess.org).
3. Any USAYESS Designee or prospective USAYESS Designee who has been banned by another national governing body, another sports organization, or the Center has an affirmative duty to disclose such information immediately to Brian Beard, UAYESS President, at [brian@usayess.org](mailto:brian@usayess.org).

## **FINDINGS**

USAYESS's criminal background check report will return "Passed" or "Flagged." A "Passed" finding means that the background check vendor located no records that would disqualify the individual. A "Passed" finding, however, is not a certification of safety or permission to bypass/ignore other screening efforts. Other disqualifying factors may exist and can be revealed through other means.

A "Flagged" finding means the criminal background check revealed criminal records that suggest the individual might not meet the criteria and may not be suitable for USAYESS Designee status.

USAYESS will review all flagged statuses and make decisions following this Policy.

Individuals who are subject to disqualification under a Flagged finding may challenge the accuracy of the information reported by the criminal background check vendor.

## **APPEAL TO BACKGROUND CHECK VENDOR**

Any disqualified individual has the right to dispute the findings of the criminal background check directly with the criminal background check vendor. A disqualified individual may not appeal the disqualification or the results of the findings of the criminal background check vendor to USAYESS. USAYESS is required by this Policy to accept the findings of the criminal background check vendor.

Individuals disqualified are excluded from participation in any USAYESS licensed competition and USAYESS-sanctioned events and/or activities as a USAYESS Designee unless an exemption is granted in accordance with the exemption request process below.

## **EXEMPTION REQUEST TO USAYESS**

Any disqualified individual has the right to seek an exemption from the USAYESS Board of Directors. The individual shall demonstrate that the conviction or charge does not violate the spirit of Safe Sport and that he or she poses no risk to the sport.

To seek an exemption from disqualification, contact Brian Beard at [brian@usayess.org](mailto:brian@usayess.org) or submit an Exemption Request Form to USAYESS found at [www.usayess.org/safesport](http://www.usayess.org/safesport).

## **FREQUENCY OF BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Criminal background checks for USAYESS Designees will be refreshed annually during the annual Membership Renewal process.

## **OTHER POTENTIALLY DISQUALIFYING FACTORS**

Even if an individual passes a criminal background check, USAYESS may determine that an individual may be disqualified and prohibited from USAYESS Designee status. Disqualification may occur if the individual has:

Been held liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of a minor;

1. Been subject to any court order involving any sexual or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order or protection; A history with another organization (employment, volunteer, etc.) of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors;
2. Resigned, been terminated, been banned, or been asked to resign from a position- paid or unpaid - due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors;
3. A history of other behavior that indicates the individual may be a danger to athletes and participants; or
4. Failed to disclose background in accordance with this Policy.

### **Review of Disqualifiers**

USAYESS will review its disqualifiers occasionally or as otherwise required or modified by law.

# Enforcement

The enforcement of this Policy falls under the jurisdiction of the USAYESS Board of Directors, except i. allegations of sexual misconduct, which falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Center, and ii—allegations of non-sexual misconduct over which the Center takes discretionary authority.

USAYESS shall recognize and enforce all penalties imposed by the Center, including lifetime bans.

USAYESS shall conduct periodic compliance audits.

# Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (the "Center") is committed to building a sports community where participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct. USAYESS supports this mission and is committed to ensuring our competition and training environments are free from abuse.

## Authority: Prevention Training and Policies

Federal law authorizes the Center to address the risk of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of amateur athletes. See Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017.

### Prevention Training

Federal law authorizes the Center to develop training to prevent abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, of any amateur athlete. At a minimum, USAYESS, along with other national governing bodies, must offer and give consistent training related to the prevention of child abuse to (1) adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors and (2) subject to parental consent, to members who are minors.

### Prevention Policies

Federal law also authorizes the Center to develop policies and procedures for implementation by USAYESS and other national governing bodies to prevent abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, of any amateur athlete. As a part of these policies and procedures, USAYESS and other national governing bodies must implement reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete who is a minor and an adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility under the jurisdiction of a national governing body without being in an observable and interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.

## Application and Implementation

USAYESS and national governing bodies (collectively, "Covered Organizations") must follow these Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. At a minimum, these policies are also strongly recommended for USAYESS Recognized Affiliates, National Member Organizations, and Local Affiliated Organizations.

USAYESS is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with these policies. Each Policy specifically defines who must adhere to it.



The Center promulgates the policies and procedures set forth herein to assist Covered Organizations in meeting their obligations under federal law. All USAYESS Recognized Affiliates, National Member Organizations, and Local Affiliated Organizations shall implement policies and procedures sufficient to comply with federal requirements.

## **REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

Violations of these policies can be reported to USAYESS by submitting a USAYESS Incident Report Form, which can be found at [www.usayess.org/safesport](http://www.usayess.org/safesport).

### **PART I**

#### **Education & Training Policy**

The USAYESS National Organization, State Affiliations, and Local Affiliations adhere to this Education & Training Policy to satisfy the training obligations. The Abuse Prevention Systems training provides the required child abuse prevention training mandated by federal law.

The following adults must complete the Abuse Prevention Systems training on child abuse prevention:

- Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- Any adult authorized by USAYESS to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete, including:
  - Head Coaches
  - Assistant Coaches
  - Team Managers
  - Licensed Officials
  - Selectors
  - Medical Directors
  - Team Attendants
  - Team Volunteers
  - USAYESS Adult staff, board, council, committee, and task force members.

The above-listed Required Adults are required to complete the Abuse Prevention Systems Training before regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins or by the latter of the following unless regular contact with a minor amateur athlete has not begun:

- No later than January 1, 2025; or
- Before regular contact with minor athletes begins; or
- Before authorized contact with minor athletes begins; or
- Within the first 30 days of initial membership or upon starting a new role, the adult is subjected to this Policy.

A refresher course is required annually, effective when the adult renews their membership with USAYESS.

## **PART II**

The following athlete abuse prevention policies must be observed:

- One-on-one interactions, including meetings and individual training sessions (USAYESS is required to establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions, as outlined in federal law.)
- Social Media and Electronic Communications
- Local Travel
- Team Travel

### **Minor Athletes Who Become Adult Athletes**

With the exception of athletes who are members of the same team, Minor Athletes who reach their 18th birthday (not their sports age but their actual age) must adhere to the provisions found in the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies when interacting with minor athletes who are 14 years of age or younger.

Minor Athletes who reach the age of majority and then obtain a position of authority that presents a power imbalance, such as becoming a coach or official, must also comply with these prevention policies regardless of the age of the minor athletes with whom they will interact. (Minor Athlete A has her 18th birthday the week before Regionals, and her teammates are under 18. She is required to follow these policies when interacting with minor athletes under 14, except for athletes under 14 who are on her team. Unless she's in a position of authority over the minor athletes, these policies do not apply to interactions with teammates.)

## **PART III**

### **Required Policies for One-On-One Interactions**

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

### **ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS**

This Policy shall apply to:

1. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors;
2. Any adult authorized by USAYESS to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor;
3. Adult members at a facility that is either partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USAYESS or at USAYESS licensed, endorsed, sanctioned, sponsored activity; and
4. Adult staff and board members of USAYESS.  
(Collectively "Applicable Adult" for the purposes of this Policy.)

## **Observable and interruptible**

- One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility partially or wholly under USAYESS's jurisdiction or at a USAYESS licensed, endorsed, sponsored activity are permitted if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult.
- One-on-one interactions between minor athletes and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility partially or wholly under USEF's jurisdiction or at a USEF licensed, endorsed, sponsored activity are prohibited or at a USEF licensed, endorsed, sponsored activity, except in the circumstances described in subpart d of this section and under emergency circumstances.

### **Best Practices for Observable and Interruptible might include:**

- Wherever possible, keep a physical distance from an athlete in order to ensure no allegation of inappropriate physical contact.
- If physical contact (adjusting a riding position) is required, the athlete's permission must be sought, and the contact should be in full view of others.
- If words of admonishment or similar are required, seeking a third party as a witness is advisable.

## **Meetings**

- Meetings between Applicable Adults and minor athletes at a facility partially or wholly under USAYESS's jurisdiction or at a USAYESS licensed, endorsed, sanctioned, sponsored activity may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
- If a one-on-one meeting occurs in an office or back room at a facility partially or wholly under USAYESS's jurisdiction, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. If available, it will occur in an office that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.

## **Meetings with mental health care professionals and health care providers**

Suppose a mental health care professional and/or health care provider meets with minor athletes at a facility partially or wholly under USAYESS's jurisdiction. In that case, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:

1. The door remains unlocked.
2. Another adult is present at the facility.
3. The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring.
4. Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the mental health care professional and/or health care provider, with a copy provided to USAYESS.

## **Individual training sessions**

Individual training sessions between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted at a facility partially or wholly under USAYESS's jurisdiction or at USAYESS licensed, endorsed, sanctioned, sponsored activity if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. It is the responsibility of the Applicable Adult to obtain the written permission of the minor's legal guardian in advance of the individual training session if the individual training session is not observable and interruptible by another adult. Permission for individual training sessions must be obtained at least every six months. Parents, guardians, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe the training session.

## **Monitoring**

When one-on-one interactions between Applicable Adults and minor athletes occur at a facility partially or wholly under USAYESS's jurisdiction, Applicable Adults will monitor these interactions. Monitoring includes knowing that the one-on-one interaction is happening, determining the approximate planned duration of the interaction, and randomly dropping in on health professionals.

## **Recommended Best Practices**

USAYESS recommends that Applicable Adults refrain from interacting one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside of the program that are not observable and interruptible (including, but not limited to, one's home and individual transportation) unless parent/legal guardian consent is provided for each out-of-program contact.

Such arrangements are strongly discouraged.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

This Policy shall apply to:

1. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors;
2. Any adult authorized by USAYESS to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor and
3. Adult staff and board members at USAYESS. (Collectively "Applicable Adult" for the purposes of this Policy.)

### **Content**

All electronic communication originating from Applicable Adults to Minor Athletes must be professional in nature. On mass communications, "bcc" should be used for recipients.

### **Open and transparent**

- Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), another Applicable Adult or the minor's legal guardian must be copied.
- If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult should respond to the minor athlete with a copy to another Applicable Adult or the minor's legal guardian.
- When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult will copy another adult.
- Minor athletes may "friend" the organization's official page.

## **Requests to discontinue**

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by USAYESS or by the Applicable Adults subject to this Policy. USAYESS will abide by any such request that their minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, absent emergency circumstances.

### **USAYESS recommends the following components:**

- a. 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.
- b. Social Media - Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes should not maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes, and such Applicable Adults should not accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from amateur athletes who are minors unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact vs. regular contact. Existing social media connections on personal pages with minor athletes should be discontinued.

## **LOCAL TRAVEL**

Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).

This Policy shall apply to:

1. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors;
2. Any adult authorized by USEF to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor and
3. Adult staff and board members at USAYESS. (Collectively "Applicable Adult" for the purposes of this Policy.)

## **Transportation**

Applicable Adults who are not also acting as legal guardians shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must have at least two minor athletes or another adult at all times unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel. In emergency situations, this permission can be sought verbally but should be followed up with written confirmation as soon as possible.

## **USAYESS recommends the following components:**

- a. Shared or Carpool Travel Arrangement  
USAYESS encourages parents/legal guardians to pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
- b. Parents/legal guardians should receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor athlete to travel alone with an Applicable Adult who is subject to these policies.

## **TEAM TRAVEL**

Team travel is a minor athlete's travel to a competition or other team activity that USAYESS plans, books, and supervises the minor athlete's travel.

This Policy shall apply to:

- Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors;
- Any adult authorized by USAYESS to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor and
- Adult staff and board members at USAYESS. (Collectively "Applicable Adult" for the purposes of this Policy.)

## **Team/competition travel**

Team travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all minor athletes, parents, and Applicable Adults traveling with USAYESS. When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete must have their legal guardian's written permission in advance and for each competition to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.

Applicable adults who travel with a USAYESS Team that includes a minor athlete must successfully pass a background check and meet other screening requirements consistent with USAYESS policies.

## **Hotel rooms**

Applicable Adults shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete (unless the Applicable Adult is the legal guardian, sibling, or is otherwise related to the minor athlete). However, a parent/legal guardian may consent to such an arrangement in advance and in writing. Furthermore, a parent/legal guardian may consent in advance and in writing to the minor athlete sharing a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an adult athlete. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings, and/or other activities, two-deep leadership (two Applicable Adults should be present) and observable and interruptible environments should be maintained.

Meetings should not be conducted in a hotel room.

## **Meetings**

Meetings shall be conducted in a manner consistent with USAYESS policy for one-on-one interactions (i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible).

## **USAYESS Recommends the following components**

USAYESS recommends that Parents/legal guardians receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor athlete to travel alone with an Applicable Adult who is subject to these policies.



# Every 40 seconds, someone loses their life to suicide.

It's time to raise awareness and  
recognize our role to help prevent it.

In the realm of youth sports, addressing mental health with the same seriousness as physical safety is crucial. Coaches play a pivotal role in creating a supportive environment where athletes feel valued and understood. It's important to be aware of potential signs of distress and mental health struggles in student-athletes. Look for changes in behavior such as withdrawal from activities or friends, a decline in performance or enthusiasm, noticeable changes in mood, and verbal expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness. Physical signs can include changes in sleep patterns or appetite and frequent physical complaints without clear cause.

If you suspect that a student-athlete might be struggling with thoughts of self-harm or suicidal ideation, approach the situation with empathy and urgency. Encourage them to seek help and offer to connect them with professional resources. For immediate support, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7 at 988, providing confidential help for those in need

By integrating mental health awareness into our coaching practices and maintaining a network of resources, we can create a safer and more supportive environment for our athletes. Recognizing the signs and taking proactive steps can make a profound difference in the lives of young individuals facing these challenges.



Ask.



Listen.



Encourage them  
to seek help.

**National Suicide & Crisis Hotline: 988**

World Health Organization | [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)





USA Youth Education in Shooting Sports

**Together. we are making a difference.**

For Safe Sport information or to make a report, visit:

[www.usayess.org/safesport](http://www.usayess.org/safesport)





**USAYESS**

PO Box 842, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

VISIT THE NEW USAYESS WEBSITE **HERE**

[www.usayess.org](http://www.usayess.org)

