

SANCTIONED

EVENT

POLICY



Effective January 1, 2025
www.usankf.org



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SANCTIONED EVENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE

USA Karate has a vested interest in the promotion of quality, structured Karate events across the USA. As the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of Karate, USA Karate is responsible for producing consistent, high-quality, fair, and safe events for all members. The USA Karate Sanctioning Program allows individual and club promoters to host high-quality events endorsed by USA Karate, thus leveraging the reach and stature of the NGB to hold better, more successful events for the promoters.

This is a mutually beneficial relation benefiting both the NGB and the promoter. USA Karate builds a stronger brand and expands membership reach through high-quality sanctioned events. Promoters can use the widely recognized brand of the NGB and associate their event with Signature Events such as the USA Open and National Championships, thus drawing more participants and generating additional revenue.

On the contrary, low-quality events, that do not uphold the standard of USA Karate negatively impact all parties involved. A poorly run, unsafe or unfair event sanctioned by the NGB damages the brand for all future sanctioned events and damages the trust of the membership. Repeated damage to the membership's trust can impact revenue for those high-quality sanctioned events and impact participation in USA Karate events.

This policy is ensuring the USA Karate brand is protected and continuously represents only the highest-quality Karate events held across the USA. The requirements set forth in this policy are minimum requirements and promoters are encouraged to seek areas of improvement in their events and strive to improve their sanctioned event each time.



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The policy involves USA Karate technical requirements, medical requirements, referee requirements and US Center for SafeSport requirements. No portion of this policy is optional. Those sanctioned events found to not follow the requirements risk losing ranking benefits and future sanctioning.

It is in the spirit of growth and mutual benefit USA Karate offers the USA Karate Sanctioning Program. Together, USA Karate and event promoters across the USA can flourish and succeed.

II. BENEFITS OF SANCTIONING

NAME RECOGNITION

Promoters who sanction events with USA Karate can associate with the NGB and their members. USA Karate has a history of producing outstanding athletes and holding high-level events. By sanctioning an event with USA Karate, a promoter can use the USA Karate logo in promotional material and will be featured on USA Karate webpages and social media sites. Promoters are also allowed to state their event is endorsed by the NGB and sanctioned by USA Karate. USA Karate is recognized across the USA as the premier sport Karate organization. Promoters are given limited access to USA Karate logos via the ***USA NKF Use of Marks and Logo Guide***.

INSURANCE

Sanctioned events are offered event insurance providing limited liability and coverage of injury to participants. This insurance only covers USA Karate members. Liability insurance is offered as a secondary insurer. Promoters are required to provide information for additional insurers for certificates of insurance.

NATIONAL RANKING

The USA Karate Sanctioning Program is part of a National Ranking System (NRS) that awards points to athletes for participation and medal placement in sanctioned events. Athletes and referees will be awarded points based on their participation and performance in sanctioned events. Those points will



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be posted and promoted by USA Karate, while being continually updated to list the top ranked athletes in the USA. This ranking will be used to determine athlete and referee awards at the end of each competitive season. Different level events will be awarded different level ranking points. Please see the Ranking Points section of the policy for additional information.

ADVERTISING VIA USA KARATE

Sanctioned events will be listed and actively promoted by USA Karate in electronic communication with USA Karate membership. Additionally, sanctioned events will be posted on the USA Karate websites and social media pages. USA Karate members will be encouraged to participate in sanctioned events by the NGB.

III. LEVELS OF SANCTION

Karate events of various sizes are held weekly across the USA. USA Karate has identified four (4) levels of competitions and accompanying sanction level. Larger tournaments with more participants will be rewarded with more ranking points and incur larger NGB requirements.

USA Karate understands tournament size may fluctuate so the following numbers are within 15 athlete registrations.

- ❖ **Level 1** event is between 1-199 athletes
- ❖ **Level 2** event is between 200-399 athletes
- ❖ **Level 3** event is 400+ athletes
- ❖ **Level 4** event is reserved for USA Karate Signature Events such as the USA Open, National Championships and All-American Classic.



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IV. RANKING POINTS

USA Karate uses a National Ranking System (NRS) for all athletes under 18 years of age competing in sanctioned events. Athletes will be ranked using the ranking points for the competitive category they are in. Promoters will be required to report results from each category to USA Karate within 5 days of the competition of the sanctioned event. Once the results are reported from the promoter, USA Karate will update the NRS and post to the USA Karate websites and social media pages.

Athlete Ranking Points are awarded based on event level as follows:

		EVENT LEVEL			
RANK		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	1 st Place	300	600	900	1,800
	2 nd Place	200	400	600	1,200
	3 rd Place	100	200	300	900

**Level 4 events are reserved for USA Karate Signature Events and hold the highest points value.*

In addition to awarding ranking points for participating athletes, USA Karate will award ranking points for participating Referees. These points will help USA Karate recognize referees and judges who are the most active and supportive of USA Karate sanctioned events. These ranking points will be used for recognition awards and may be used by USA Karate to identify future leaders in the USA Karate Referee Corps.

Referee Ranking Points are awarded based on event level as follows:

- ❖ **Level 1** events are awarded 100 points to each participating referee/judge.
- ❖ **Level 2** events are awarded 200 points to each participating referee/judge.
- ❖ **Level 3** events are awarded 300 points to each participating referee/judge.
- ❖ **Level 4** events are reserved for USA Karate Signature Events and hold the highest point value. Participating referee/judges will be awarded 600 points.



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V. Membership Requirements

All participants in USA Karate sanctioned events must be members of the NGB.

Participants include:

- ❖ All competing athletes
- ❖ All officiating referees and judges
- ❖ Event promoter(s)
- ❖ Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer staff are not considered participants and do not need to be members of USA Karate.

All participants, including referees and judges, must have a minimum of a **Level 2 - Local Competitive Membership or USA Karate Trial Membership** to participate in Level 1-3 sanctioned events. Memberships must be obtained directly from USA NKF and cannot be purchased from sanctioned event promoters. Due to SafeSport requirements that may apply, participants should obtain USA Karate memberships well in advance of the sanctioned event.

Level 4 events require a minimum of a **Level 3 – National Competitive Membership** to participate.

Under no circumstances may a non-member participant in a USA Karate sanctioned event.

VI. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Promoters of USA Karate sanctioned events are required to use the official USA Karate designated software for event registration. Event promoters may use other software for tournament operations, scoring and charting, however, all event registrations must be processed and logged via the official USA Karate event software.

All participants, including referees and judges, are required to register using the USA Karate events software in advance of the sanctioned event. This process allows USA Karate to verify membership and SafeSport requirements needed to ensure a safe and proper event. The official USA Karate event software



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automatically checks membership and SafeSport status of the participant against the USA Karate database to ensure valid membership and SafeSport status.

At the conclusion of the event all results must be uploaded to the official USA Karate event software and submitted to USA Karate for ranking and result posting. This process is done automatically via the official USA Karate event software.

VII. CHIEF REFEREE REQUIREMENTS

All USA Karate sanctioned events are required to identify and declare a Chief Referee when making the request for sanctioning. The Chief Referee is responsible for the fair administration and enforcement of USA Karate rules at the event. The Chief Referee must be knowledgeable of the latest USA Karate rules and should work to ensure competition is administered fairly and in accordance with USA Karate rules.

The Chief Referee must be present during the entire event and their referee license must be valid and current at the time of the event.

The Chief Referee must also meet the membership requirements and be a member of USA Karate.

Chief Referee requirements are as follows:

- ❖ **Level 1** events must have a National Referee identified as the Chief Referee.
- ❖ **Level 2** events must have a Pan American Karate Federation (PKF) licensed referee identified as the Chief Referee.
- ❖ **Level 3** events must have a World Karate Federation (WKF) licensed referee identified as the Chief Referee.
- ❖ **Level 4** events must have a WKF Referee A licensed referee identified as the Chief Referee.

If the Chief Referee changes after the promoter has completed the sanctioning application, the promoter must notify USA Karate prior to the event.



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VIII. MEDICAL PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

To ensure a safe competitive environment, USA Karate sanctioned competitions must have trained and designated medical personnel onsite throughout the event. The medical area should be clearly marked and in an easily accessible area inside the competition area. The promoters should ensure that all medical personnel have all necessary supplies to safely handle most competition injuries.

Medical Personnel requirements are as follows:

- ❖ **Level 1** events must have at least one (1) medical personnel who holds a current EMT or higher certification.
- ❖ **Level 2** events must have at least one (1) medical personnel who holds a current EMT or higher certification.
- ❖ **Level 3** events must have at least two (2) medical personnel onsite the entire event who hold an EMT or higher certification.
- ❖ **Level 4** events must have at least two (2) medical personnel onsite the entire event who hold an EMT or higher certification.

If the medical personnel are absent from the event for any period of time, competition may not take place. Any sanctioned event being found to hold competition without meeting the Medical Personnel Requirements will immediately forfeit the USA Karate sanction and all ranking points will be revoked from all participants.



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IX. SANCTIONING FEES

All sanctioning fees are paid directly to the USA NKF when completing the sanctioned application. If the application for sanction is denied for any reason prior to the event, the fee will be refunded by the USA NKF National Office. Once the sanction has been approved and processed, no refunds or credits will be issued by USA Karate for any reason. If the promoter violates the sanctioning policy, the sanctioning fee will be forfeited to USA Karate and no refund will be issued.

If the promoter fails to make payment of the sanction fee, the event will not be sanctioned by USA Karate and any insurance coverage from USA Karate will be void.

Sanctioning fees are determined by the level of the event. Fees are as follows:

- ❖ **Level 1** events are \$200
- ❖ **Level 2** events are \$400
- ❖ **Level 3** events are \$600
- ❖ **Level 4** events are hosted only by USA Karate.

X. SAFESPORT REQUIREMENTS

The protection of USA Karate athletes is of paramount importance and is the driving force behind stringent SafeSport requirements. Event promoters are responsible for strict adherence to all SafeSport requirements to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the sanctioned event.

Promoters must follow the ***SafeSport Guidelines in Appendix A*** of this policy. All required signage must be posted and remain posted throughout the sanctioned event.

Any violation of the SafeSport Code must be reported to the US Center for SafeSport and to USA Karate in accordance with the ***Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)***. Reporting information, helpful links and an incident report can be found in Appendix A of this policy.



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XI. VENUE AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Field of Play is defined as the area in which competition takes place. This area should be well defined, protected, and restricted from those not directly involved in the competition.

To ensure consistency in all USA Karate sanctioned events, competitions should strive to meet the following minimum standards:

- ❖ All competitions must take place on matted tatami consistent with ***USA Karate Rules of Competition***.
 - **Level 1** events must have at least one (1) regulation size tatami for adult competitors. Smaller size tatami may be used at Level 1 events for youth athletes.
 - **Level 2** and above events must use regulation size tatami for all competitions as described in ***USA Karate Rules of Competition***.
- ❖ Level 2 and above events must have at least four (4) matted tatamis for competition.
- ❖ A barrier must be used to separate the spectator section and public from the Field of Play. Access to the Field of Play must be restricted to ensure orderly and fair competition.
- ❖ Only participating athletes, referees, judges, coaches and volunteers are permitted access to the Field of Play.
- ❖ Level 2 and above events must use electronic scoreboards consistent with those of USA Karate Signature Events or the World Karate Federation (WKF).

XII. VIOLATIONS OF POLICY

Complaints about a USA Karate sanctioned event may be submitted to USA Karate in any form. USA Karate welcomes the opportunity to gather feedback, both positive and negative, to improve the quality of competition, strengthen the brand and provide the safest environment for all participants.

USA Karate will address all complaints involving a sanctioned event and determine if corrective action is needed or if the complaint is unfounded. If the complaint is found to be valid the following corrective action may be taken:



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- ✓ Verbal counselling with the promoter to address the issue and improve the quality of the event and USA Karate brand.
- ✓ Written notice to the promoter requiring the issue be addressed and documenting the complaint.
- ✓ For repeated or serious violations, Section XIII of this policy may be used.

XIII. RAMIFICATIONS FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

It is in the best interest of USA Karate and event promoters to host the highest-level events and to maintain high standards for sanctioned events across the USA. Willful disregard of the sanctioning policy will not be permitted.

If an event is found to have violated the USA Karate Sanctioned Event Policy, the promoter and/or event could face the following actions:

- ✓ Reported to the US Center for SafeSport
- ✓ Reported to USA Karate Ethics Committee
- ✓ Loss of future sanctions
- ✓ Participating athletes striped of results and ranking points
- ✓ Participating referees and judges striped of ranking points
- ✓ Forfeiture of sanctioning fee
- ✓ Suspension/loss of USA Karate membership
- ✓ Loss of insurance coverage for events
- ✓ Potential legal action from USA Karate

XIV. PROCESS FOR APPLYING FOR SANCTION

Promoters of events wishing to host a USA Karate sanctioned event must complete the application process two (2) weeks prior to the event to allow the National Office time to review the application and confirm the provided information.



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If any information related to the event changes from the time of sanction approval to the actual event, the promoter must immediately notify the USA Karate National Office. Significant changes to and already submitted and approved application may result in the sanction being revoked.

The sanctioning fee must be paid and the time of submitting the application for sanction. If the sanctioning application is not approved, USA Karate will refund the sanctioning fee to the promoter within thirty (30) days.

The process for applying for sanction can be found in Appendix C of this policy.

XV. APPROVING AUTHORITY

The USA Karate Sanctioned Events Program is under the authority of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Director of Sport will administer the program on behalf of the CEO.



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APPENDIX A

The USA Karate Safe Sport Program consists of online SafeSport™ Training, background screening and a collection of policies to protect our members. SafeSport™ Training and background screening must be completed for each USA Karate Official, Coach, Adult National Team Member, Committee Member, Staff and Board Member. Athletes 18 years and over are required to complete SafeSport™ Training. Volunteers and Vendors are required to review the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies At-A-Glance and the Reporting At-A-Glance. Those who have not completed the program requirements or who are on the banned list will not be allowed to participate in any capacity at any USA Karate Sanctioned Event.

Who Needs to Complete SafeSport & Background Screening

Any participant at a Sanctioned event who is 18 years old or older. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Tournament Director
- ❖ Volunteer Director
- ❖ Referee Director
- ❖ All officials/referees 18 years or older
- ❖ All coaches 18 years or older
- ❖ All medical staff
- ❖ All press credential holders who will have “field of play” access
- ❖ Athletes ages 18 years or older (Only SafeSport)

How to Complete SafeSport training & Background Screening

1. Create a profile in our membership site <https://usankf.sport80.com>
 - a. If you are a volunteer, medical staff, or press you can use the free membership called club participant. You will receive an ID number that you will use when registering.
Tournamentinabox will not complete your registration until everything is current.



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2. Click on the Center for SafeSport section
 - a. Click on +Access Core Training. Additional training is optional. Core is the required training. After completing Core, the following year you will be able to complete a refresher course.
 - b. No need to print your certificate. Your results are saved in your Sport80 profile.
3. For background screening click on the background screening section
 - a. Then click and add background screening
 - b. There are two options, domestic and international. Background screenings are good for 2 years. Background screenings are done through NCSI.
 - c. This may take some time so please submit your screening requests at least 30 days before the event.

Who Does NOT Need to Complete SafeSport & Background Screening

- ❖ Volunteers
- ❖ Vendors
- ❖ Officials/referees under the age of 18 years
- ❖ Athletes under the age of 18 years
- ❖ Spectators



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SafeSport CHECKLIST

BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Know which participants are required to complete SafeSport training and Background Screenings.
- ☐ Verify that the participants' SafeSport Certification and Background Screening do not expire before the completion of the event.
- ☐ Search [USA Karate Safe Sport Compliance](#)
- ☐ Confirm that none of the participants including vendors, volunteers, staff, registered participants, EMTs, etc. are on either of the following lists - [USA Karate Member Suspension & Ineligible List](#) (scroll down on web page for list) or [Centralized Disciplinary Database](#).
- ☐ Walk the whole venue before the event and look for any locations that could allow for 1:1 interaction. If possible, remove access to these areas (i.e. shut/lock doors) and designate an individual or individuals to monitor those areas regularly and randomly.
- ☐ Utilize credentials or wristbands to show the different categories of participants.
- ☐ Contact David Richmond (drichmond@usankf.org) and request that he send out SafeSport email within 24 hours of the start of the event to all participants, and request an affirmative acknowledgement that the material has been reviewed before credentials are provided.
- ☐ Print SafeSport signs to be displayed at tournament venue.

DAY OF EVENT

- ☐ Have QR codes available for all participants.
- ☐ QR code shows the MAAPP and How to Report a Concern.
- ☐ Assign individuals to monitor training spaces, locker rooms and bathrooms and maintain the monitor log.
- ☐ If there is on-site registration, make sure all participants required to complete SafeSport training and background screening have current certifications before issuing their credentials.



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SafeSport FAQ

1. I just want to volunteer for a couple of hours at my child's karate tournament. Do I need to complete the SafeSport training?

No. All that is required is that you register with your email so that the tournament director can email you a copy of the MAAPP and reporting requirements/methods if a violation is seen. You are, however, required to have reviewed the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies At-A-Glance and the Reporting At-A-Glance materials in advance of your participation at the event.

2. I am a Jr. Instructor under the age of 18 and I am going to be a referee at our local tournament. Am I required to complete the SafeSport training?

No. Only those 18 and older are required to complete the SafeSport training. We do suggest that you take the SAFESPORT® FOR YOUTH ATHLETES (AGES 13-17) course which focuses on consent and respectful behavior, supporting friends who have experienced abuse or misconduct, and resources for reporting. Parental consent required at the start of course.

3. Where can I find the SafeSport training?

SafeSport training can be found at USA Karate's membership site <https://usankf.sport80.com>

4. My SafeSport training will expire right before the tournament date, can I take it early?

Yes. You can access the training up to a month early. Just click on the "green current" circle in the SafeSport section of your profile.

5. I have completed SafeSport with another sport. Is it possible for it to be current with USA Karate?

Yes. Please email the office at natoffice@usankf.org and they will be able to get profile merged with your other sport.

6. How do I know if my SafeSport is expired?

Log into your profile in USA Karate's Sport80 membership site. In the Center for SafeSport section, you will either see "current" or "lapsed".



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SafeSport **SIGNS** to display throughout your venue.

These include:

- ☐ **SafeSport TABLE SIGN** (explaining that event is governed by the USOPC SafeSport Program
 - also contains the QR codes for Reporting A Concern and a copy of the MAAPP)
 - To be displayed on check-in tables and throughout the venue
- ☐ The **MAAPP At A Glance**
 - To be printed and made available onsite to participants upon request
 - To be emailed out to every participant
 - [PDF: MAAPP At A Glance](#)
- ☐ **How to REPORT A CONCERN** (including who locally to contact about a concern)
 - To be displayed throughout the venue
 - [PDF: How To Report A Concern](#)
- ☐ **At this Event** – explaining that all one-on-one interactions are observable and interruptible
 - To be displayed throughout the venue
 - [PDF: At this Event](#)
- ☐ **In This Locker Room / Athletic Training**
 - To be displayed in all locker rooms
 - [PDF: Locker Room Signs](#)



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HELPFUL LINKS

- The SafeSport Code can be found [here](#).
- Search for USA Karate Safe Sport Compliance [here](#).
- [Click here](#) to download the Incident Report Form
- Incident reports may be submitted by email to ethics@usankf.org.
- USA Karate Ethics Website - USAKarateEthics.com
- U.S. Center for SafeSport - uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern | 833-5US-SAFE (587-7233)
- USA-NKF Minor Athletes and Officials Abuse Prevention Policies - [USANKF MAAPPS 2025](#)



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APPENDIX B

QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

	LEVEL			
	I	II	III	IV
Number of Athletes	1 - 199 (+/- 15)	200 - 399	400 +	Signature Event (NKF host ONLY)
Membership Requirement	Level 2 (Local Competitive Member) OR Day Pass Membership	Level 2 (Local Competitive Member) OR Day Pass Membership	Level 2 (Local Competitive Member) OR Day Pass Membership	Level 3 (National Competitive Member)
Chief Referee Requirement	National Referee	PKF Level	WKF Level	WKF Referee A
USA NKF Certified Tournament Director Required	No	Yes (Future)	Yes (Future)	Yes
Sanctioning Fee	\$200	\$400	\$600	N/A
Athlete Ranking Value	1 (300 / 200 / 100)*	2 (600 / 400 / 200)	3 (900 / 600 / 300)	6 (1800 / 1200 / 900)
Referee Ranking Value	1 (100 pts)	2 (200 pts)	3 (300 pts)	6 (600 pts)



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APPENDIX C

SANCTIONED EVENTS APPLICATION PROCESS

All event applications will be electronically submitted via the official USA Karate event software.

The following process must be followed by all promoters seeking a USA Karate sanction for their event at least two (2) weeks prior to the event:

1. Go to USA NKF official website at www.usankf.org.
2. Navigate to “Events” tab
3. Select “Sanction Event”
4. Complete the online Sanctioned Event Application thoroughly.
5. Pay sanctioned event fee.
6. Send email to USA Karate National Office at natoffice@usankf.org notifying them of your completed application for a sanctioned event.

Once USA Karate receives the application for sanction, USA Karate will:

- Verify membership and SafeSport requirements for the listed Chief Referee, Tournament Promoter and Volunteer Coordinator.
- May contact listed personnel to confirm participation
- Issue insurance certificate to promoter
- Publish sanctioned event on social media sites
- Publish sanctioned event on USA Karate event calendars
- Provide promoters with ***USA Karate Use of Marks and Logo Guide***

If a sanctioned event application is denied, USA Karate will notify the promoter in writing and provide a brief explanation.