



WHISTLEBLOWER & ANTI-RETALIATION

POLICY

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WHISTLEBLOWER & ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY

Version 6_October 2025

1. PURPOSE

This Whistleblower Policy (the "Policy") is intended to support a strong culture of integrity and ethical conduct within USA KARATE by encouraging, valuing, and protecting good faith reporting by Affiliated Individuals (defined as athletes, directors, officers, employees, contractors, members, committee members, task force members, hearing panel members, and volunteers) of alleged violations of any applicable law, policy or potential ethics issue.

The purpose of this Policy is to encourage Affiliated Individuals to report violations of certain rules and laws, to make Affiliated Individuals aware of their right to report violations and to protect Affiliated Individuals from retaliation for reporting such violations and participating in subsequent investigations or proceedings.

USA KARATE strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations in good faith or cooperates with related investigations.

2. VIOLATIONS COVERED BY THIS POLICY

Any reported allegations non-compliance of:

- any applicable state or federal law, rule or regulation
- any USA KARATE Bylaw, Policy or Procedure
- Any USOPC Bylaw or Policy
- Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act
- principles of ethics
- accounting or financial practices (e.g., fraud)

Any Affiliated Individual with questions regarding a potential policy violation may review the USA KARATE policy documents here: <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-karate/about-us/governance-documents> or contact the Ethics Committee (ethics@usankf.org) or USA KARATE Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for more information.

Any suspected violent or criminal activity should be reported to law enforcement immediately.

Additionally, all athlete safety violations must be reported. The requirements in the USA KARATE Participant Safety Handbook, USA KARATE Minor Athletes and Officials Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) and the SafeSport Code should be referenced and reviewed for mandatory reporting procedures regarding minors.

Nothing in this Policy changes or replaces any mandatory reporting obligations under the SafeSport Code for the Olympic and Paralympic Movements.

3. REPORTING RETALIATION

As defined in Section 220501(b)(11) of the Act, any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, including removal from a training facility, reduced coaching or training, reduced meals or housing, and removal from competition carried out against a Protected Individual as a result of any communication, including the filing of a formal complaint, by the Protected Individual or a parent or legal guardian of the Protected Individual relating to the allegation of physical abuse, sexual harassment, or emotional abuse, with the United States Center for SafeSport; a coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official associated with the USOPC; the United States Attorney General; a federal or state law enforcement authority; the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission; or Congress. Retaliation also refers to any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, against any person who in good faith reports misconduct, and/or violations of the USOPC's or NGBs' Bylaws, policies, and procedures. Athletes who disclose information to or seek assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds are also protected from retaliation as set forth in Section 220509(b)(5) of the Act.

USA KARATE strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations in good faith or cooperates with related investigations.

HOW TO REPORT

USA KARATE has an open-door policy and Affiliated Individuals have options for how to report concerns about potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations.

Reports may be made online at <https://www.usakarateethics.com/> or by calling the Ethics Hotline at 844-598-1865. Both systems provide the ability for anonymous reporting.

Affiliated Individuals can make a report to the Ethics Committee (ethics@usankf.org) or Chief Executive Officer. Affiliated Individuals can also make reports directly to the Chair of Ethics Committee or Board of Directors (board@usankf.org).

Affiliated Individuals **should not** "investigate" the matter of concern or "determine fault" or "how to fix it". The Affiliated Individual should submit the report in one of the ways listed above.

In addition, USA KARATE, nor any of its employees, contractors, agents, or volunteers, shall take or threaten any action against an athlete as a reprisal for disclosing information to or seeking assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds.

ACTING IN GOOD FAITH

All reports regarding perceived violations must be submitted in good faith. Individuals making reports are expected to possess a substantiated reason for believing that a violation may have occurred. Reports should not be made with malicious intent, nor should they contain false information or lack factual basis. Upholding the principle of good faith is essential for maintaining the integrity of the reporting process and ensures that concerns are addressed in a responsible and appropriate manner.

Knowingly making a false report is in violation of this Policy and the USA KARATE Code of Conduct. Such a violation may be reported under this Policy and will be investigated in the manner described in this document.

4. INVESTIGATION

Upon receipt of a report, The Ethics Committee shall conduct an initial inquiry and is responsible for determining if there is potential violation. The initial inquiry may include the following steps: (1) a review of relevant documentation or policies and/or (2) interviews with parties involved. The Ethics Committee may close a complaint at the initial inquiry stage. A complaint may not warrant an investigation following an initial inquiry if, for example, the Ethics Committee determines that it does not have jurisdiction over the matter under this Policy, if there is insufficient evidence or if the reporting party declined to participate in the initial inquiry.

Based on the complaint, the appropriate committee or organization will be notified of the complaint for adjudication. If the complaint is internal to USA KARATE it will follow the Complaint and Hearing Procedures to ensure that the complaint is review by a disinterested, fair and unbiased panel of the Ethics Committee. External issues could be referred to the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee, U.S. Center for SafeSport, US Anti-Doping Agency or Law Enforcement.

In all cases, USA KARATE is committed to ensuring that no good faith report goes unheard or ignored.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

All reports will be treated as confidentially as possible; given that some disclosure may be needed to conduct the investigation, comply with the law, and/or provide accused individuals access to due process. However, a matter may be reported anonymously, and the reporter may choose to remain anonymous as it is investigated.

6. FOLLOW-UP

During the course of an investigation, USA KARATE will report back to the Affiliated Individual on the progress and results as appropriate. Affiliated Individuals may request updates, but confidentiality and legal obligations may affect the details available.

7. POLICY OWNER

USA KARATE's Ethics Committee and CEO will own this policy and the enforcement of the Policy. Questions about the policy and its enforcement can be directed via email to ethics@usankf.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Contact information for individuals who are responsible for the Policy and enforcement of the Policy

Michael Cain, CEO, USA KARATE

Email | mcain@usankf.org

Phone | (317) 402-1754

Adam Older, Chair, Ethics Committee

Email | aolder@usankf.org

Phone | (215) 565-6827

Office of the Athlete Ombuds

Email | ombudsman@usaathlete.org

Phone | (719) 866-5000

Website | usaathlete.org

USOPC Integrity Portal

Website | <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/53006/index.html>