

2024 RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

NGB NAME:	USA Fencing
EVENT SITE:	Tigard, OR
EVENT DATE:	February 3, 2024

BACKGROUND AND AUDIT PURPOSE

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) is working to build a sport community in which everyone can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and misconduct. Federal law 36 U.S.C. §220541 authorizes the Center to develop and enforce abuse prevention policies and procedures that the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and its National Governing Bodies (NGBs) must implement.

In accordance with that law, the Center has been granted authority to annually complete regular and random audits of NGBs and the USOPC. The Center objectively evaluates adherence and level of compliance to the requirements set forth in the SafeSport Code and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP).

RISK ASSESSMENT SCOPE

This 2024 Risk Assessment covered the following areas:

- **GENERAL OBSERVATIONS**
 - Physical Event Layout
 - MAAPP and Reporting Communications and Awareness
 - Credential System
 - Ineligible Participation
- **REQUIRED PREVENTION POLICIES**
 - One-on-One Interactions
 - Meetings and Training Sessions
 - Athletic Training Modalities, Massages, and Rubdowns
 - Locker Rooms and Changing Areas
 - Electronic Communications
 - Transportation
 - Lodging
- **RESPONSE & RESOLUTION**

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

During the assessment, the Center:

- Reviewed policies and procedures relative to MAAPP implementation
- Evaluated processes
- Administered implementation fidelity testing
- Conducted on-site inspections
- Interviewed coaches, staff, parents, and athletes

Some areas reviewed were not applicable to some events or competitions. The Center requested additional information and clarification as needed from the Organization's staff during the assessment.

SECTION 1: RISK MITIGATION FACTORS

PURPOSE:

This section describes observations made at the event that may lead to a reduced risk for: misconduct, violations of the MAAPP or Code, participation of a banned or suspended individual.

PHYSICAL EVENT SPACE LAYOUT:

- The Portland RYC was held at the Northwest Fencing Center in Tigard, OR.
 - The event was organized by the head coach and the executive director of the Northwest Fencing Club.
 - A USA Fencing staff member was at the event for purposes of the audit; did not assist in running the event.
- The event area was overall observable and interruptible.
- Main Level:
 - The stretch of multiple fencing strips were where the competition itself was held.
 - The fencing strips were restricted using stanchions allowing field-of-play access to only athletes, coaches and officials.
- Second Level (Mezzanine):
 - Spectating and athlete-equipment storage were on the second-floor mezzanine.
 - Field-of-play was completely visible from the mezzanine's spectator seating.

MAAPP/REPORTING COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS:

- At the event, the auditor spoke with 2 event directors, 1 coach, 1 official, and 2 parents.
 - All individuals interviewed were aware of the MAAPP and how to report.
- The host club had SafeSport-related signage posted throughout the venue. Signage included: "Report a Concern" and single flyers for "Recognizing", "Reporting", "Interactions" and "Spectator Code of Conduct".
- Signage was posted at the entrance to the field of play, hallway to restrooms, stairways leading to mezzanine and in the main lobby.

CREDENTIAL SYSTEM:

- The host club used credentials only for Coaches who were manually checked using the USA Fencing Tournament Database. If all requirements were met, credentials were issued.
- Athletes were required to scan their membership card to check-in for their event.
- Event director handled the check-in process and the check-in desk.

INELIGIBLE PARTICIPATION:

- USA Fencing requires their officials and athletes to register prior to the event and are required to be checked for SafeSport compliance by using the USA Fencing Tournament Database.
- USA Fencing allows coaches who have a USA Fencing membership to register for the event day-of. Coaches who arrive day-of are required to be manually checked for membership compliance which includes SafeSport compliance.
- All event participants are checked against USA Fencing's Ineligible and Suspended list.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No Recommendations for this section.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

No Management Response required.

SECTION 2: RISK INCREASING FACTORS

PURPOSE:

This section describes observations made at the event that may lead to an increased risk for: misconduct, violations of the MAAPP or Code, participation of a banned or suspended individual.

PHYSICAL EVENT SPACE LAYOUT:

- The building was public and open during the competition for fencing lessons.

MAAPP/REPORTING COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS:

- In USA Fencing, coaches are all considered day-of participants. Coaches' check-in and are manually checked for coaching compliance which includes SafeSport compliance.
- USA Fencing QCS policy requires that day-of coaches/participants receive communication of the MAAPP and reporting protocol via a QR code. However, this did not occur at this event. All coaches, because they are required to be members, receive monthly communication via newsletter of FenceSafe information which includes communication of the MAAPP and reporting protocol.

CREDENTIAL SYSTEM:

- USA Fencing provided credentials to the coaches. Only coaches were allowed on the field of play during direct elimination rounds.

INELIGIBLE PARTICIPATION:

- All participants were checked against the USA Fencing Ineligible and Suspended list.
- USA Fencing does have two individuals posted publicly to their website who are currently listed as administrative holds with the Center. USA Fencing explained that they decided to have both individuals listed because of issues unrelated to administrative holds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No Recommendations for this section.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

No Management Response required.

SECTION 3: MAAPP REQUIRED PREVENTION POLICIES

PURPOSE:

This section describes observations made at the event in relation to the implementation of the Required Prevention Policies to improve and ensure a safe environment for Minor Athletes.

MEETINGS AND TRAINING SESSIONS:

- The vast majority of the competition was open and observable. All meetings and training occurred along the side of the fencing strips or in the spectator area right behind the fencing strips. Both areas were open and observable with numerous coaches, parents, spectators, and officials walking through.

MAAPP ELEMENTS NOT OBSERVED OR NOT APPLICABLE AT THE EVENT:

ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS:

- No impermissible one-on-one interactions were observed.

ATHLETIC TRAINING MODALITIES / MASSAGES / RUBDOWNS:

- USA Fencing stated that a parent-volunteer would be handling any ice, bandages etc., however there would be no hands-on treatments of athletes. Auditor did not observe any medical or parent-volunteer on site.

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS:

- There was no locker room on-site. Athletes arrived at the event dressed for competition and were asked to use the mezzanine to store all of their belongings.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:

- No electronic communications were observed.

TRANSPORTATION:

- No transportation was observed at the event.

LODGING:

- No lodging was provided for participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No Recommendations for this section.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

No Management Response required.

SECTION 4: RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION

PURPOSE:

This section describes issues and items found during the audit review of the Organization's Response and Resolution policies. Other details related to Response and Resolution requirements can be found in the Final Audit Report.

- USA Fencing's reporting protocol itself has no cost/fee associated with filing a report, however the policy itself it does not explicitly state this.
- Please reference Response and Resolution requirements within the public audit report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. USA Fencing should consider explicitly stating in their written policy and on their reporting form that there is no cost/fee associated with filing a report.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

1. USA Fencing has updated its FenceSafe Handbook to explicitly state that there is no fee/cost associated with filing a report of any kind. The updated language can be found in Section I.D.1 of our FenceSafe Handbook.

SECTION 5: OTHER (OPTIONAL)

- Not Applicable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No Recommendations for this section.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

No Management Response required.