



## USA Judo Whistle-Blower Policy

### Purpose

This Whistle-Blower Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to support a strong culture of integrity and ethical conduct at USA Judo by encouraging, valuing and protecting good faith reporting by athletes, directors, officers, employees, contractors, members, committee members, task force members, hearing panel members and volunteers (“Affiliated Individuals”) of USA Judo of any alleged violation of any applicable law or policy or any potential ethics issue.

The freedom to speak up means being able to raise concerns in whatever way is most comfortable and effective and feeling free to cooperate in investigations that follow. It also means that USA Judo has zero tolerance for retaliation of any kind against people who speak up in good faith.

### Violations Covered by this Policy

This Policy is for use where there may be a violation of:

- The Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act
- The US Olympic and Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”) Bylaws
- USOPC policies
- federal, state or local law, rule or regulation
- USA Judo Bylaws
- USA Judo policy and procedures
- principles of ethics
- accepted accounting or financial practices (e.g. fraud)

If an Affiliated Individual is unsure about whether a matter might be a policy violation or is unsure about their reporting responsibility for a particular type of matter, please start by reviewing the particular policy involved. USA Judo staff should refer to the USA Judo Employee Handbook, Financial Policies and Procedures Manual, Code of Ethics and USA Judo SafeSport Handbook for more information.

Keep in mind that some violations **must** be reported. Specifically, any violations of local, state, or federal law or any violations of applicable athlete safety policies, including those of USA Judo and the U.S. Center for SafeSport, must be reported.

**Nothing in this Policy changes or replaces any mandatory reporting obligations under the SafeSport Code for the Olympic and Paralympic Movements – talk to USA Judo’s CEO if you have any questions about those obligations.**

## **Reporting**

### No Retaliation

USA Judo has an open-door policy and encourages Affiliated Individuals to share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints in a way and to the people with which they are most comfortable. This means Affiliated Individuals have options for how to report any concern about a potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violation.

USA Judo has zero tolerance for retaliation against people who in good faith reports potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations, or who cooperates with investigations of those reports.

Retaliation is any adverse or discriminatory action, or 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 Individuals related to the allegation or 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 USA Judo’s Bylaws, policies, and procedures.

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

Any such retaliation can be reported as described below in the same way as any other policy violation. It will be treated as a violation of this Policy and USA Judo’s Code of Conduct and may lead to serious consequences including termination of employment or participation for anyone involved in retaliation.

### How to Report

There are several ways an individual may make a report under this Policy.

- a) Reporters may submit a report to [ethics@usajudo.us](mailto:ethics@usajudo.us). This inbox is monitored by USA Judo staff and the Chair of the Ethics Committee who will route reports to the right party to address the concerns.
- b) Reporters can make a report to the Director of Finance, Compliance & Office Operations [[melissa.jones@usajudo.us](mailto:melissa.jones@usajudo.us)].

Please remember that as a reporter, you do not need to (and should not) investigate the matter of concern or determine fault or how to fix it. A reporter does their part by making an issue known so the right people can take action.

### Acting in Good Faith

Just as we need to make sure that no one in our community is fearful of speaking up, we also need to make sure that no one in our community is fearful about false reports that might harm them.

With that in mind, anyone reporting a perceived ethical, policy, financial or legal violation must be acting in good faith and have some basis for believing there may be a violation. Anyone that makes a false report knowing that it is false or that it has no basis is violating this Policy and the USA Judo Code of Conduct in the same way as someone retaliating against a good faith reporter. Such a violation may itself be reported under this Policy and it may lead to serious consequences, including termination of employment or participation.

### **Investigation**

Once a report is made in one of the ways described above, it will be forwarded to the responsible party for investigation. In all cases, USA Judo is committed to ensuring that no good faith report goes unheard or ignored.

Investigations of reports of potential violations will be handled according to the USA Judo Ethics and Grievance Procedures, including who will investigate the matter and who is empowered to make the determination about whether a violation occurred for that matter.

In all cases, matters will be investigated by a disinterested party. If, after investigating to the extent warranted by the circumstances, the investigator concludes that the subject of a report has committed a violation under the governing policy, the subject of the report will be subject to discipline to the extent permitted by the USA Judo Ethics and Grievance Procedures.

USA Judo is committed to reviewing all incoming reports, but there may be occasions when USA Judo cannot conduct a full investigation, and a report will be dismissed without investigation. Such circumstances include the reporter declining to participate in the investigation, an allegation that is not actionable by USA Judo, or insufficient evidence for an allegation such that an investigation is not warranted.

In the event that an investigation of potential retaliation finds that an employee of USA Judo has retaliated against an individual in response to any communication, including a formal complaint, from that individual (or their parent / legal guardian) related to an allegation of physical abuse, sexual harassment, or emotional abuse, USA Judo shall immediately suspend that employee without pay or terminate the employee.

The Director of Finance, Compliance & Office Operations will advise the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Board of Directors of all complaints and their resolution and will report regularly to the USA Judo Ethics & Grievance Committee.

The Director of Finance, Compliance & Office Operations shall immediately notify the Audit Committee of any concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing and work with the committee until the matter is resolved. In the event such person is involved in the complaint, the Chair of the Ethics Committee will coordinate with the Audit Committee.

### **Confidentiality**

In many cases, a reported matter will need investigation to reach the right resolution. Cooperation as a reporter or otherwise may be very helpful and much appreciated. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the reporter will be maintained. However, some information may have to be disclosed to certain parties in order to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals access to due process.

If a matter is reported anonymously and the reporter chooses to remain anonymous as it is investigated, USA Judo will respect that. USA Judo will review all reports with the same level of attention, but if a reporter chooses to remain anonymous, USA Judo may be limited in its ability to fully investigate a report.

The Director of Finance, Compliance & Office Operations, is responsible for this policy and its enforcement and can be contacted with any questions about this policy. [Melissa.jones@usajudo.us](mailto:Melissa.jones@usajudo.us)

### **Additional Resources**

Individuals who wish to report concerns related to this policy as it relates to involvement in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, or are uncomfortable reporting a concern directly to their NGB, may also submit a report using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#). The Integrity Portal allows individuals to submit concerns to the USOPC confidentially and/or anonymously. Reports may be made online or by telephone.

Website: [usopc.ethicspoint.com](http://usopc.ethicspoint.com)

Hotline: 877-404-9935

Team USA athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds for independent and confidential advice on a variety of sport related matters, including their rights, applicable rules, policies or processes, and questions related to resolving disputes and grievances. The Athlete Ombuds can also help Team USA athletes connect with legal counsel or mental health resources if needed. All other NGB athletes (i.e., athletes competing domestically at the masters or youth level, recreational athletes, foreign athletes), are welcome to visit the Athlete Ombuds website to review informational resources and should work directly with their NGB to understand additional resources and options available to them.

Email: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

Website: [www.usathlete.org](http://www.usathlete.org)

Policy approved by the Board of Directors on ( ).