



WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Policy Owner: USA Weightlifting CEO

Effective Date: June 25, 2021

1. **Purpose.** This Whistle-Blower Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to support a strong culture of integrity and ethical conduct at the USA Weightlifting by encouraging, valuing, and protecting good faith reporting by athletes, directors, officers, employees, members, committee members, task force members, hearing panel members, contractors, and volunteers (“Affiliated Individuals”) of USA Weightlifting 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 Weightlifting has zero tolerance for retaliation of any kind against people who speak up in good faith.

2. **Violations Covered by this Policy.** This Policy is for use where there may be a violation, or an alleged violation of:
 - 2.1. any applicable law, rule or regulation, including the Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act
 - 2.2. any USA Weightlifting policy
 - 2.3. USAW Bylaws
 - 2.4. principles of ethics
 - 2.5. accounting or financial practices (e.g., fraud)
 - 2.6. the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee Bylaws and policies
 - 2.7. Violations of local, state, or federal laws

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 Weightlifting staff should refer to the CEO for more information.

Also, keep in mind that some violations **must** be reported. Specifically, please be familiar with the requirements in the USA Weightlifting Code, Bylaws, Athlete Safety policies and any applicable policies of the USOPC, USADA or US Center for Safesport, and of course, if an Affiliated Individual suspects any criminal activity against a person or property, they should report this directly to law enforcement immediately.

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

3. Reporting

3.1. No Retaliation. Retaliation, for the purposes of this Policy, is defined as any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, carried out against an athlete, employee, board member or officer, member, committee member, task force member, hearing panel member, volunteer, or others associated with USA Weightlifting as a result of any report, complaint, or other communication reporting misconduct of any kind to USA Weightlifting, the USOPC, the Office of the Athlete Ombuds, any law enforcement agency or government entity, or employees of these organizations. Examples of adverse or discriminatory actions that would be considered retaliatory include, but are not limited to:

- Removal from a training facility
- Reduced coaching or training
- Reduced meals or housing
- Removal from competition

USA Weightlifting has an open-door policy and encourages Affiliated Individuals to share questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints in the 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 Weightlifting has zero tolerance for retaliation against people who make good faith reports of potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations, or who cooperate with investigations of those reports. Any such retaliation can be reported as described in Section 3.2 below.

No employee, contractor, agent, volunteer, or NGB 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 as outlined in Section 220509(b)(5) of the Act. It will be treated as a violation of this Policy and USA Weightlifting's Code of Conduct, and may lead to serious consequences including termination of employment or participation for anyone involved in such retaliation.

3.2. How to Report. Affiliated Individuals are encouraged to promptly report any known or suspected violations of USA Weightlifting policies.

Reports may be submitted through any of the following channels:

- Compliance Manager – jeanne.westney@usaweightlifting.org
- [USAW Reporting Form](#)
- [U.S. Center for SafeSport \(for sexual misconduct involving a Minor\)](#)
- [USOPC Integrity Portal](#) | 877-404-9935

Any USAW staff member receiving a report must promptly forward it to the Compliance Manager.

Affiliated Individuals are not required to investigate the matter or determine fault. Their responsibility is to report concerns in good faith so that appropriate review may occur. Retaliation against individuals who report in good faith is prohibited.

- 3.3. 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 Weightlifting 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.

- 4. Investigation.** Once a report is made in one of the ways described above, the person receiving the report is responsible for getting it to the person who can best address the concern, based on the matter reported and in keeping with other appropriate policies. In all cases, USA Weightlifting is committed to ensuring that no good faith report goes unheard or ignored.

The Ethics Committee and Judicial Committee are constituted of independent and disinterested committee members, with athlete representation on each committee. The USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee is responsible for investigating alleged violations, including athlete involvement if required. After investigating any such alleged violation, the Ethics Committee shall make a recommendation regarding whether a violation occurred and, if so, recommend a sanction. Upon closure of an Ethics case, the Judicial Committee shall make the final determination of all grievances and complaints filed or referred to it under Section 14 of the Bylaws. In the case of a report against a staff member which may fall outside of the Ethics Committee responsibilities, the committee will be responsible for coordinating among these people so that reporters can be confident that reported concerns get to the people best positioned to act on them.

- 5. Confidentiality.** In many cases, a reported matter will need investigation in order to reach the right resolution. Cooperation as a reporter or otherwise may be very helpful and much appreciated. Reports will be treated as confidentially as possible; 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 Weightlifting will respect that.

- 6. Follow Up.** If an Affiliated Individual reports an alleged violation of ethics, USA Weightlifting policy, or applicable laws, USA Weightlifting will report back to the Affiliated Individual on the progress and investigation results as appropriate. And of course, the Affiliated Individual is always free to follow up to learn more from the person they reported to. Confidentiality and legal obligations may affect the details available in common with USA Weightlifting's complaint process available at the USA Weightlifting website.

If the investigation of a report that was made in good faith is not to the satisfaction of the reporter, then the reporter may report that, too.

Thank you for helping to ensure that USA Weightlifting is a safe zone for speaking up in good faith on important matters.

7. **USA Weightlifting Resources.** USA Weightlifting's Compliance Manager, together with the Ethics Committee, is responsible for this policy and its enforcement and can be contacted with any questions about this policy at: Compliance@USAWeightlifting.org
8. **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 USAW, may also submit a report to the USOPC 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

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 USAW 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 USAW to understand additional resources and options available to them.

Email: ombudsman@usathlete.org

Website: www.usathlete.org

Revision No.	Revision/ Approval Date	Effective Date	Revision Approver	Description of Revision
v.1	06/25/2021	06/25/2021	N/A	Original whistle-blower policy
v.2	09/29/2025	09/29/2025	CEO	Administrative updates to add resource contact information (section 8) and reformat entire document to be consistent with formatting of other USAW policies.
v.3	2/25/2026	2/26/2026	CEO	Administrative updates to add resource contact information (section 3)
V.4	3/17/2026	3/17/2026	CEO	Section 2, Section 3.1 and Section 3.2 amended with USOPC required language