



USA Team Handball

Athlete Safety & Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy

Policy Effective December 1, 2024

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Overview

USA Team Handball, with the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee and the U.S. Center for SafeSport, is committed to building a sport community where Participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct. USA Team Handball has developed the following Athlete Safety Policy for the attention of all Directors, Employees, Local Affiliated Organizations, and Members of USA Team Handball, including both individual and club members. Misconduct is not tolerated and this policy outlines how USA Team Handball will educate, protect, and take action on behalf of its members as it relates to unsafe behavior.

The USA Team Handball strategy has six key steps:

1. Definition of the Policy
2. Training on Safety Issues
3. Screening of Individuals
4. Monitoring and Supervision of Activities
5. Safe Reporting, Investigative Ability, Clearance of Innocently Accused Individuals and Action Against Correctly Accused Individuals
6. USA Team Handball Commitment to Response

Enforcement of the policies contained in this handbook falls under the responsibility of USA Team Handball, with the exception of misconduct, in which the U.S. Center for SafeSport has or takes over jurisdiction. Nothing in this Handbook should be interpreted to prevent a Club, USA Team Handball, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, or the USOPC from taking appropriate interim measures upon notice of an imminent threat of harm.

Any inquiries about the policies contained in this Safe Sport Policy Handbook should be directed to the USA Team Handball staff SafeSport contact: help@usateamhandball.org.

Definitions

Key words or concepts used in this policy handbook are outlined below.

Adult Participant:

- Any adult (18 years of age or older) who is:
 - a. A member or license holder of USATH or a LAO;
 - b. An athlete of a LAO;
 - c. An employee or board member of USATH or a LAO;
 - d. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USATH or a LAO;
 - e. Authorized, approved, or appointed by USATH or a LAO to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes.¹
 - f. Any event volunteer, such as a ticket taker, usher, or concessions worker

Please refer to the chart below for more information.

Adult Participant	Regular Contact	Authority
Adult Athletes		
Adult Athletes w/ Regular Contact** (e.g., Those on the same team as Minor Athletes)	✓	
Athletic Trainers	✓	✓
Coaches	✓	✓
Contractors/Vendors/Media License Holders	✓	
LAO Board Members*		✓
LAO Staff		✓
Medical Professionals	✓	✓
Officials	✓	✓
USATH Board Members		✓
USATH Staff/Interns		✓
Volunteers (e.g., ticket takers, registrations, concession stand workers, game videographers, etc.)		
Volunteers w/ Regular Contact (Locker Room Monitors, Credentialed Media members, etc.)	✓	

*Only LAO admins / primary contacts require background checks, not all LAO members

** Examples: Adult Athletes who play with Minor Athletes, Adults who regularly play against Minor Athletes, Adult Athletes who have frequent direct contact with Minor Athletes.

¹ This may include volunteers, medical staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, officials, adult athletes, staff, board members, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition.

Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant:

- An Adult Participant who assists a parasport athlete requiring help with activities of daily living (ADL) and preparation for athletic participation. This support can be provided by a Guide for Blind or visually impaired athletes or can include assistance with transfer, dressing, showering, medication administration, and toileting. Personal Care Assistants are different for every athlete and should be individualized to fit their specific needs. When assisting a Minor Athlete, Adult Participant PCAs must be authorized by the athlete's parent/guardian.

Athlete

- Any individual who participates or competes as an athlete in a USA Team Handball sanctioned event and/or is a USA Team Handball athlete member.

Amateur Athlete:

- An athlete who meets the eligibility standards established by USATH organization for the sport in which the athlete competes.

Authority:

When one person's position over another person is such that, based on the totality of the circumstances, they have the power or right to direct, control, give orders to, or make decisions for that person. Also see the Power Imbalance definition in the SafeSport Code.

The Center

The U.S. Center for SafeSport.

The Center has jurisdiction over Participants, including those:

- Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USATH
- USATH or the USOPC authorized, approves, or appoints to a position of authority over athletes or who will have frequent contact with athletes
- Identified by USATH as being within the Center's jurisdiction

Child, children, minor and youth

- Any person under the age of 18. Here, "child," "children," "minor" and "youth" are used interchangeably. A child is someone under the age of 18 or who has not attained the age of legal majority in the state in which he or she resides.

Child Abuse

- A legal definition of child abuse exists in each state. To find guidelines concerning each state, visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway and to find statute information for a particular State, go to http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/index.cfm

Close-in-Age Exception:

- An exception applicable to certain policies when an Adult Participant does not have authority over a Minor Athlete *and* is not more than four years older than the Minor

Athlete (e.g., a 19-year-old and a 16-year-old). Note: this exception *only* applies within the prevention policies and *not* regarding conduct defined in the SafeSport Code.

Coach

- Any adult that has or shares the responsibility for instructing, teaching, training, or advising an athlete in the context of Team Handball.

The Code

- The U.S. Center for SafeSport's rules, policies, and procedures, including, but not limited to, the document titled "SafeSport Code."

Dual Relationships

- An exception applicable to certain policies when an Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete outside of the sport program and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent at least annually authorizing the exception.

In-Program Contact

- Any contact (including communications, interactions, or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport.

Examples of activities related to participation in sport that could be identified as In-Program Contact include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post-game meals or outings, team travel, review of game film, team- or sport-related relationship building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community service, sport education, or competition site visits.

Local Affiliated Organization (sometimes referred to as an "LAO" or "Club")

- A registered USA Team Handball club, such as a high school, collegiate or local club.

Minor Athlete

- Amateur Athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or partially or fully under the jurisdiction of, USATH or LAOs.²

Misconduct

- Conduct which results in harm, the potential for harm or the imminent threat of harm or is otherwise a violation of this Handbook or the Code. Age is irrelevant to misconduct. There are six primary types of misconduct in sport: sexual misconduct, physical misconduct, emotional misconduct, bullying, harassment, and hazing.
- USA Team Handball follows the definitions of misconduct as outlined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport's code published at: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/response-and-resolution/>

² This term shall also include any minor who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, a non-athlete role partially or fully under the jurisdiction of USATH or LAO. Examples include, but are not limited to: officials, coaches, or volunteers.

National Governing Body (NGB)

- A U.S. Olympic National Governing Body or Pan American Sport Organization recognized by the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee pursuant to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. §§ 220501, et seq. This definition shall also apply to the USOPC, or other sports entity approved by the USOPC, when they have assumed responsibility for the management or governance of a sport included on the program of the Olympic, Paralympic, or Pan-American Games.

Partial or Full Jurisdiction

- Includes any sanctioned event (including all travel and lodging in connection with the event) by the USATH or LAOs, or any facility that USTAH or LAO owns, leases, or rents for practice, training or competition.

Regular Contact

- Ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any Minor Athlete(s). USATH defines Regular Contact as six (6) or more instances of In-Program Contact during a 12-month period.

Residential Environment

- A place in which participants live or stay temporarily. Residential environments include, but are not limited to, onsite housing at training facilities, billeting, hotel stays, or rentals (i.e., Airbnb, VRBO, HomeToGo, etc.).
 - **Billeting:** A residential environment facilitated by an Adult Participant, USATH, LAO, the USOPC, or sanctioned event staff in which a Minor Athlete is temporarily housed in a private home with an adult or family who is not related to or known by the Minor Athlete. This lodging arrangement is in conjunction with an activity related to sport.

U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC)

- A federally chartered nonprofit corporation that serves as the National Olympic Committee and National Paralympic Committee for the United States.

SafeSport Education & Training

Organizational Requirements for Education & Training

USATH and LAOs must implement proactive policies designed to prevent abuse. These organizational requirements are described below.

- a. USATH must track whether Adult Participants under its jurisdiction complete the required training listed in the Education & Training Policy section below.
- b. USATH and LAOs must, every 12 months, offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to minor athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - i. For training to minor athletes, USATH and LAOs must track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to minor athletes.
 - ii. USATH and LAOs are not required to track individual course completions of minor athletes.
- c. USATH and LAOs must, every 12 months, offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - i. For training to parents, USATH and LAOs must track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to parents.
 - ii. USATH and LAOs are not required to track individual course completions of parents.

Required Prevention Policies and Implementation

1. USATH must develop minor athlete abuse prevention policies to limit one-on-one interactions between a Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant. These policies must contain the mandatory components of the Center's Required Policies for One-on-One Interactions from the Center's Model MAAPP. These model policies cover:
 - a. Meetings
 - b. Individual training sessions
 - c. Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities and Manual Therapy
 - d. Locker rooms and changing areas
 - e. Electronic communications
 - f. Transportation
 - g. Lodging and Residential Environments
2. The policies must be approved by the Center as described in subsection (C) below. The policies may include the recommended components of the Required Policies for One-on-One

Interactions from the Center's Model MAAPP and the Recommended Policies for Keeping Young Athletes Safe from the Center's Model MAAPP. Given the uniqueness of each sport, however, some recommended components or policies may not be feasible or appropriate. Such concerns should be addressed with the Center during the Policy Approval and Submission Process discussed below. USATH may choose to implement stricter standards than the model policies.

3. USATH must also require that its LAOs implement these policies within each LAO.
4. USATH and LAOs must implement these policies for all In-Program Contact.
 1. At sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under its jurisdiction, USATH and LAOs must take steps to ensure the policies are implemented and followed.
 2. For In-Program Contact that occurs outside an Organization's sanctioned event or facilities, implementing these policies means:
 - a. Communicating the policies to individuals under its jurisdiction;
 - b. Establishing a reporting mechanism for violations of the policies;
 - c. Investigating and enforcing violations of the policies.
5. USATH and LAOs must have a reporting mechanism to accept reports that an Adult Participant is violating USATH Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. USATH and LAOs must appropriately investigate and resolve any reports received, unless the violation is reported to the Center and it exercises jurisdiction over the report. This requirement is in addition to requirements to report abuse under the SafeSport Code.

Policy Approval and Submission Process

1. USATH may adopt the mandatory minimum requirements of the MAAPP as-is or adapt it to fit their needs. Regardless, USATH and LAOs must submit their policies to the Center at compliance@safesport.org for review and approval by April 1, 2024. The Center will approve, approve with modifications, or deny the policies. If the Center denies the proposed policy, the mandatory components of Required Policies for One-on-One Interactions of the Center's Model MAAPP become the default policy until the Center approves the policy.
2. USATH must require their LAOs to incorporate the mandatory components of Required Policies for One-on-One Interactions. USATH may require that their LAOs implement the USATH's policies, which may be more stringent than the policies in Required Policies for One-on-One Interactions.

3. The mandatory components of Required Policies for One-on-One Interactions of the Center's Model MAAPP will serve as the default policy for any Organization that fails to develop its own policy as required by this section.

Any changes made to the USATH MAAPP after the policy is approved must be submitted to the Center for approval. The previously approved MAAPP will remain in effect until written approval is provided to USATH from the Center.

Education & Training Policy

A. Mandatory Child Abuse Prevention Training for Adult Participants

1. Adult Participants Required to Complete Training

- a. The following Adult Participants must complete the *SafeSport® Trained Core* through the Center's online training:
 - i. Adult Participants who have regular contact with any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor. Please see chart on page 5 for clarification between Regular Contact and Authority.
 - ii. Adult Participants who have authority over any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor. Please see chart on page 5 for clarification between Regular Contact and Authority.
 - iii. Adult Participants who are an employee or board member of USATH or LAOs.

- b. Adult Participants who are Medical Professionals required to take training under Section (a) can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the *SafeSport® Trained Core*.

2. Timing of Training

- a. Adult Participants must complete this training before regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins or within the first 45 days of either initial membership or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy, whichever comes first.

3. Refresher Training

The above-listed Adult Participants must complete a refresher course every 12 months, beginning the calendar year after completing the *SafeSport® Trained Core Course*. Every four years, Adult Participants will complete the *SafeSport® Trained Core Course* training. Medical providers can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the *SafeSport® Trained Core Course* and are required to take the refresher courses on an annual basis if they meet the criteria for A(1).

B. Minor Athlete Training Must Be Offered

1. USATH and LAOs every 12 months, must offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to minor athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
2. The Center offers youth courses, located at safesporttrained.org, that meet this requirement.

C. Parent Training Must Be Offered

1. USATH and LAOs every 12 months, must offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
2. The Center offers a parent course, located at safesporttrained.org, that meets this requirement.

D. Optional Training

1. Adult Participants serving in a volunteer capacity, who will not have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes, should take the Center's brief Volunteer Course (or *SafeSport® Trained Core*) before engaging or interacting with any minor athlete(s).
2. USATH and LAOs may provide training *in addition to* the *SafeSport® Trained Core*, although they cannot refer to this training as "SafeSport" training. **Training other than the *SafeSport® Trained Core* or Refresher does not satisfy this policy.**
3. Parents of Minor Athletes are provided free online access to the Center's parent course and are encouraged to take the training.

E. Exemptions and Accommodations

The Center's online training courses contain information about various forms of abuse. The courses do not include graphic descriptions of abuse or show violent images or video. The content may be uncomfortable or trigger trauma for some participants.

1. Exemptions to the online training requirement may be requested by survivors of abuse and misconduct. Survivors of abuse can request an exemption by contacting USATH or can choose to contact the Center directly to request an exemption at exemptions@safesport.org. All exemptions granted by the Center or the USATH in this category are considered indefinite and do not need to be re-requested every year.
2. Exemptions to the online training requirement for reasons other than survivor of abuse and misconduct are limited to cognitive or physical disability or language barrier. Requests for these exemptions must be made by the individual to the USATH. USATH will determine whether to grant the exemption. If USATH grants the exemption, it must track the exemption to ensure it is appropriately applied to the individual's membership status.

USATH must preserve documentation that the exemption was granted and for what duration.

3. The Center has several options available to assist individuals in completing the online training courses, including screen reader-compatible versions and course availability in several languages, including English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, Russian, German, and Japanese. If none of the available options will fit the individual's needs, USATH may determine whether to grant an exemption.

Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies

One-On-One Interactions

The U.S. Center for SafeSport and USATH recognize that youth-adult relationships can be healthy and valuable for development. Policies on one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships. As child sexual abuse is often perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations, it is critical that USATH limit such interactions between youth and adults and implement programs that reduce the risk of sexual abuse.

All one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible, except in emergency circumstances or with a documented exception.

Exceptions

There are certain relationships and situations in which one-on-one interactions may be allowed or necessary. This section identifies policy exceptions for close-in-age relationships, Personal Care Assistants, dual relationships, and emergencies.

The following exceptions are applicable within all Required Prevention Policies unless otherwise noted.

1. A Close-in-Age Exception

The purpose of this exception is to allow for continued relationships among athletes on the same team.

This exception allows for one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete if:

- a. The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete; and
- b. The Adult Participant is not more than 4 years older (determined by birth date) than the Minor Athlete.

Note: This exception is different than the close-in-age exception in the SafeSport Code pertaining to misconduct.

2. Exceptions for Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants Working with a Minor Athlete

This exception exists for Adult Participants who also assist an athlete with activities of daily living and preparation for athletic participation.

This exception allows for one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete if the following requirements are met:

- a. the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent to USATH or LAOs for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
- b. the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
- c. the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with USATH's background check policy.

3. Exceptions for Dual Relationships

This exception allows for one-on-one In-Program Contact when the Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete that is outside of the sport program. The exception requires written consent of the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian at least annually. The consent must identify for which Required Prevention Policies the parent/guardian is allowing the one-on-one In-Program Contact.

4. Emergency Exception

This exception applies to all Required Prevention Policies for situations where an Adult Participant must violate requirement(s) of the MAAPP due to an emergency. Adult Participants must carefully consider whether specific circumstances meet the threshold of "emergency." Adult Participants should document emergency situations and report the these directly to the USA Team Handball SafeSport customer service inbox of help@usateamhandball.org, or directly to the CEO as soon as possible after the emergency situation has concluded.

The Center recommends parents take training on child abuse prevention before providing consent to the above exceptions. The Center offers a free Parent Course at safesporttrained.org.

Meetings

Sexual abuse often happens when children are alone with their abusers. This section provides policies for meetings to limit one-on-one interactions between children and adults, including mental health care professionals and licensed health care providers.

1. Observable and Interruptible

- a. Adult Participants must ensure that all In-Program meetings with Minor Athletes be observable and interruptible, unless an exception exists.

2. Meetings with licensed mental health care professionals and health care providers (other than athletic trainers)

If a licensed mental health care professional, licensed health care provider, or a student under the supervision of a licensed mental health care professional or licensed health care provider, meets one-on-one with a Minor Athlete at a sanctioned event or a facility, which is partially or fully under USATH or LAOs' jurisdiction, the meeting must be observable and interruptible except:

- a. If the door remains unlocked; and
- b. Another adult is present at the facility and notified that a meeting is occurring, although the Minor Athlete's identity needs not be disclosed; and
- c. USATH or LAOs are notified that the professional or provider will be meeting with a Minor Athlete; and,
- d. The professional or provider obtains consent consistent with applicable laws and ethical standards, which can be withdrawn at any time.

Athletic trainers who are covered under these policies must follow the "Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities" policy.

3. Parent Training

Parents/guardians will be offered the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to have a meeting with an Adult Participant subject to these policies.

Individual Training Sessions

Some abusers will single out athletes for special one-on-one instruction. This kind of isolation provides opportunities for abuse to occur. This section establishes rules for individual training sessions to protect youth athletes from uncomfortable or unsafe situations.

1. Observable and Interruptible

Adult Participants must ensure all In-Program individual training sessions with a Minor Athlete be observable and interruptible unless an exception exists.

2. Consent

The Adult Participant providing the individual training session must receive advance, written consent from the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian at least annually, which can be withdrawn at any time; and

3. Parent Observation

Parents/guardians must be allowed to observe the individual training session.

4. Monitoring

If a permitted meeting or training session takes place between an Adult Participant(s) and a Minor Athlete(s) at a facility partially or fully under USATH or LAO jurisdiction, another Adult Participant will monitor each meeting or training session. Monitoring includes reviewing the parent/guardian consent form, knowing that the meeting or training session is occurring, knowing the approximate planned duration of the meeting or training session, and dropping in on the meeting or training session.

5. Parent Training

Parents/guardians will be offered the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to have individual training sessions with an Adult Participant subject to these policies.

Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities

Many athletes require therapies to prevent or treat injuries. However, these treatment sessions can place children in vulnerable positions, especially if they involve physical contact with adults. This section establishes standards for therapeutic and recovery modalities and manual therapy to reduce the risk of inappropriate contact between youth and adults.

Note: Only the emergency exception applies within this policy.

1. Observable and Interruptible

Adult Participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact during manual therapy and therapeutic modalities and recovery modalities with Minor Athletes must be observable and interruptible.

2. Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities Requirements

Adult Participants must ensure all In-Program manual therapy and therapeutic and recovery modalities meet the following requirements:

- a. Have another Adult Participant physically present for the modality or manual therapy; and
- b. Have documented consent as explained in subsection (3) below; and

- c. Be performed with the Minor Athlete fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals are always covered; and
- d. Allow parents/guardians in the room as an observer, except for competition or training venues that limit credentialing; and
- e. The provider must narrate the steps in the modality before taking them, seeking assent of the Minor Athlete throughout the process.

3. Consent

- a. Providers of manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities or USATH or LAOs, when applicable, must obtain consent at least annually from Minor Athletes' parents/guardians before providing any manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities.
- b. Minor Athletes or their parents/guardians can withdraw consent at any time.

4. Parent Training

Parents/guardians will be offered the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to receive a manual therapy, therapeutic modality, or recovery modality.

- 5. When possible, techniques must be used to reduce physical touch of Minor Athletes.
- 6. Only licensed providers are permitted to administer manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities.
- 7. Coaches, regardless of whether they are licensed massage therapists, must not massage Minor Athletes.

Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Policy

Young athletes may be especially vulnerable to abuse in changing areas where they are undressing and possibly showering. Appropriate monitoring is necessary in these areas to prevent abuse and other inappropriate conduct. This section outlines policies for locker rooms and changing areas to ensure privacy and safety.

1. Observable and Interruptible

Adult Participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact with Minor Athlete(s) in a locker room, changing area, or similar space where Minor Athlete(s) are present is observable and interruptible, unless an exception exists.

2. Conduct in Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces

- a. No Adult Participant or Minor Athlete can use the photographic or recording capabilities of any device in locker rooms, changing areas, or any other area designated as a place for changing clothes or undressing.
- b. Adult Participants must not remove their clothes or behave in a manner that intentionally or recklessly exposes their breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a Minor Athlete in a locker room or changing area.
- c. Adult Participants must not shower with Minor Athletes unless:
 - i. The Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age Exception; or
 - ii. The shower is part of a pre- or post-activity rinse while wearing swimwear.
- d. Parents/guardians may request in writing that their Minor Athlete(s) not change or shower with Adult Participant(s) during In-Program Contact. USATH and LAOs and the Adult Participant(s) must abide by this request.

3. Media and Championship Celebrations in Locker Rooms

USATH and LAOs may permit recording or photography in locker rooms for the purpose of highlighting a sport or athletic accomplishment if:

- a. Parent/legal guardian consent has been obtained; and
- b. USATH or LAOs approves the specific instance of recording or photography; and
- c. Two or more Adult Participants are present; and
- d. Everyone is fully clothed.

4. Personal Care Assistants

Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants are permitted to be with and assist Minor Athlete(s) in locker rooms, changing areas, and similar spaces where other Minor Athletes are present, if they meet the requirements detailed in the Exceptions for Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants Working with a Minor Athlete section.

5. Availability and Monitoring of Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces

- a. USATH or LAOs must provide a private or semi-private place for Minor Athletes that need to change clothes or undress at sanctioned events or facilities partially or fully under USATH or LAO jurisdiction.
- b. USATH and LAOs must monitor the use of locker rooms, changing areas, and similar spaces to ensure compliance with these policies at sanctioned events or facilities partially or fully under USATH or LAO jurisdiction.

Electronic Communications³

Technology has made it easier for teams to communicate and share information.

Unfortunately, it also makes it easier for abusers to contact children without supervision or share inappropriate images and video. This section sets standards for appropriate electronic communications between youth and adults.

1. Open and Transparent

- a. All one-on-one electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be Open and Transparent, unless an exception exists.
- b. “Open and Transparent” means that the Adult Participant copies or includes the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant on every communication.
 - i. If a Minor Athlete communicates with the Adult Participant first, the Adult Participant must follow this policy if the Adult Participant responds.
- c. Only platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication may be used to communicate with Minor Athletes.

2. Team Communication

When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team or any number of Minor Athletes on the team, the Adult Participant must copy or include the Minor Athletes’ parents/guardians, another adult family member of the Minor Athletes, or another Adult Participant.

3. Content

All electronic communication originating from an Adult Participant(s) to a Minor Athlete(s) must be professional in nature unless an exception exists.

4. Requests to Discontinue

Parents/guardians may request in writing that USATH and LAOs or an Adult Participant not contact their Minor Athlete through any form of electronic communication. USATH and LAOs and the Adult Participant must abide by any request to discontinue, absent emergency circumstances.

5. Hours

Electronic communications may be sent only between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. local time for the location of the Minor Athlete.

³ Electronic communications include, but are not limited to: email, phone calls, videoconferencing, video coaching, texting, social media, or through any other electronic medium.

6. Social Media Connections

Adult Participants, except those with a Dual Relationship or who meet the Close-in-Age Exception, are not permitted to have private social media connections with Minor Athletes and must discontinue existing social media connections with Minor Athletes.

Transportation

Athletes are often carpooling or traveling without the supervision of their parent/guardian to practices and competitions. This can place them in vulnerable positions where they are susceptible to abuse. This section establishes policies for adults transporting children to or from sport activities.

1. Observable and Interruptible

Adult participants must ensure that all In-Program Contact during Transportation is Observable and Interruptible unless an exception exists or:

- a. The Adult Participant has advanced, written consent to transport the Minor Athlete one-on-one, obtained at least annually from the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.
- b. The Adult Participant is accompanied by another Adult Participant or at least two minors who are at least 8 years of age.

2. Additional Requirements for Transportation Authorized or Funded by USATH or LAOs

- a. Written consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian is required for all transportation authorized or funded by USATH or an LAO at least annually.
- b. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.

3. Shared or Carpool Travel Arrangement

USATH and LAOs encourages parents/guardians to pick up their Minor Athlete first and drop off their Minor Athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

4. Parent Training

Parents/guardians will be offered the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for their Minor Athlete to travel one-on-one with an Adult Participant.

Lodging and Residential Environments

Youth athletes traveling overnight face greater risk of sexual abuse if they are traveling without their parent/guardian. Abusers can take advantage of the situation by trying to have unsupervised time alone with children. This section sets rules for sleeping arrangements and room monitoring to protect athletes during overnight travel.

1. Observable and Interruptible

All In-Program Contact during lodging must be observable and interruptible unless an exception exists.

- a. Lodging arrangements covered under this policy include, but are not limited to, hotel stays, rentals (i.e., Airbnb, VRBO, HomeToGo, etc.), and long-term residential environments, including lodging at training sites and billeting.

2. Hotel Rooms and Other Sleeping Arrangements

- a. An Adult Participant cannot share a hotel room or otherwise sleep in the same room with a Minor Athlete(s), unless an exception exists and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided USATH or LAOs or Adult Participant with advance, written consent for each specific lodging arrangement.
- b. Written consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian must be obtained for all In-Program lodging at least annually.
- c. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.

3. Monitoring or Room Checks During In-Program Travel

If USATH or LAOs or team performs room checks during In-Program lodging, the one-on-one interaction policy must be followed and at least two adults must be present for the room checks.

4. Additional Requirements for Lodging Authorized or Funded by USATH or LAOs

Adult Participants that travel overnight with Minor Athlete(s) are assumed to have Authority over Minor Athlete(s) and thus must comply with the Education and Training policy, unless the Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age exception.

5. Parent Training

Parents/guardians will be offered the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training on child abuse prevention before providing consent for lodging arrangements under this policy.

Out-of-Program Contact

Adult Participants, who do not meet the Close-in-Age Exception nor have a Dual Relationship with a Minor Athlete, must not have out-of-program contact with Minor

Athlete(s) without legal/parent guardian consent, even if the out-of-program contact is not one-on-one.

Gifting

1. Adult Participants, who do not meet the Close-in-Age Exception nor have a Dual Relationship with a Minor Athlete, must not give personal gifts to Minor Athlete(s).
2. Gifts that are equally distributed to all athletes and serve a motivational or educational purpose are permitted.

Photography/Video

1. Photographs or videos of athletes may only be taken in public view and must observe generally accepted standards of decency.
2. Adult Participants may not publicly share or post photos or videos of Minor Athlete(s) if the Adult Participant has not obtained the parent/guardian and Minor Athlete's consent.

Reporting Violations

It is of fundamental importance to USA Team Handball that individuals feel able to come forward and report abuse, or suspected abuse in a safe and, if requested, anonymous manner. All stakeholders in USA Team Handball should be aware of how to report abuse. USA Team Handball is committed to removing any and all barriers to the safe and effective reporting of abuse within USA Team Handball.

There are no associated costs, fees, or other financial barriers to submitting a SafeSport or MAAPP report.

Who Must Report

Any member, volunteer, participant, employee or Director of USA Team Handball must report both actual and perceived breaches of any policy outlined in this handbook, including the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. Where appropriate they should ensure they report to both the U.S. Center for SafeSport and additionally to the local law enforcement authorities.

It is vital that no individual hesitates in reporting either violations or perceived violations, DOES NOT attempt to evaluate the credibility of any claim and instead refer to USA Team Handball or the U.S. Center for SafeSport and to the local authorities.

To Whom to Report

Complaints of a **sexual nature** related to this policy should be reported directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport without delay.

SafeSport Report Online and Helpline

<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>

(720) 531-0340

In addition to reporting any abuse to the U.S. Center on SafeSport, persons must also report suspected child physical or sexual abuse to the appropriate law enforcement authority. Members of USA Team Handball (inclusive of employees) should not under any circumstances attempt to evaluate credibility or validity of any sexual or physical abuse allegation before reporting to the relevant law enforcement authority.

Complaints of a **non-sexual nature, physical and/or emotional misconduct** related to this policy should be reported directly to the USA Team Handball SafeSport customer service inbox of help@usateamhandball.org, directly to the CEO, or anonymously via the link on <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-team-handball/safe-sport>.

Complaints of violations of the Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy should be reported directly to the USA Team Handball SafeSport customer service inbox of

help@usateamhandball.org, directly to the CEO, or anonymously via the link on <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-team-handball/safe-sport>.

Anonymous Reporting

An individual has the absolute right, as far as the law allows, to report anonymously if they wish to do so, however it is strongly encouraged the following information is included in your report;

- Name of the complainant or complainants
- Type of Misconduct alleged
- Name or Names of the individuals alleged to be committing misconduct or misconducts
- Exact if known, approximate if not known dates of misconduct (there is no time limit on misconducts)
- Names of any other individuals who it is believed may have (any) information regarding the misconduct
- Summary of reasons to believe the misconduct has taken place

A copy of the USA Team Handball Reporting Form can be found at:

<https://www.teamusa.org/usa-team-handball/safe-sport>

Whistleblower Policy & Protection

Regardless of the outcome of an investigation, The U.S. Center for SafeSport will not tolerate any type of retaliation or victimization of any individual who comes forward to report misconduct in good faith. Any such action shall be considered itself a breach of the SafeSport Code and subject to USA Team Handball disciplinary procedures, the punishment for which will presumptively be permanent expulsion from USA Team Handball.

False Accusations

In addition to constituting misconduct, filing a knowingly false allegation that a Participant engaged in Prohibited Conduct may violate state criminal law and civil defamation laws. Any person making a knowingly false allegation in a matter over which the Center exercises jurisdiction shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Center.

- a. An allegation is false if the events reported did not occur, and the person making the report knows the events did not occur.
- b. A false allegation is different from an unsubstantiated allegation; an unsubstantiated allegation means there is insufficient supporting evidence to determine whether an allegation is true or false. Absent demonstrable misconduct, an unsubstantiated allegation alone is not grounds for a Code violation.

Bad Faith Allegations

USA Team Handball has zero-tolerance policy for Bad Faith Allegations. A report that is made in bad faith, is malicious or frivolous will be considered in breach of this policy. Individuals reporting in bad faith will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Misconduct Related to Reporting

Failure to Report: an Adult Participant who fails to report actual or suspected Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse to the Center and, when appropriate, to law enforcement may be subject to disciplinary action under the Center's resolution procedures and may also be subject to federal or state penalties.

- a. The obligation to report is broader than reporting a pending charge or criminal arrest of a Participant; it requires reporting to the Center any conduct which, if true, would constitute Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse. The obligation to report to the Center is an ongoing one and is not satisfied simply by making an initial report. The obligation includes reporting, on a timely basis, all information of which an Adult Participant becomes aware, including the names of witnesses, third-party reporters, and Claimants.
- b. The obligation to report includes personally identifying information of a potential Claimant to the extent known at the time of the report, as well as a duty to reasonably supplement the report as to identifying information learned at a later time.
- c. Participants should not investigate or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of allegations involving Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse. Participants making a good faith report are not required to prove the reports are true before reporting.

Response to Reports

Reporting to Law Enforcement and/or Child Protective Services

An Adult Participant who learns of information and reasonably suspects that a child has suffered an incident of child abuse, including sexual abuse, shall immediately make a report of the suspected abuse to both Law Enforcement and the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

- a. Law Enforcement
 - i. The agency designated by the Attorney General, consistent with federal requirements set forth in section 226 of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C. § 20341).
 - ii. Applicable State Law Enforcement agency; learn more about this requirement by visiting <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting>.
- b. U.S. Center for SafeSport
 - i. Through the Center for SafeSport's online reporting form, www.safesport.org.
 - ii. By phone at 720-531-0340, during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM MT – 5:00 PM MT.)

Reporting such conduct to the Center does not satisfy an Adult Participant's obligation to report to law enforcement or other appropriate authorities consistent with section 226 of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C. § 20341).

Immediate Suspension

When an allegation in breach of any element of the USA Team Handball SafeSport policy and the elements of such a violation are established through the complaint, the accused individual may face an immediate and precautionary suspension of their membership within USA Team Handball.

The individual may remain suspended until the outcome of a process involving the U.S. Center for SafeSport is completed. A hearing may occur pursuant to the USA Team Handball Bylaws under the supervision and control of the Judicial Committee, or until the completion of a law enforcement process. (For the avoidance of doubt, the individual will remain suspended until the judgment of Guilty or Not Guilty is passed by a Court of Law). Such suspension in no way implies guilt on the part of the accused but is made purely to provide precautionary protection to USA Team Handball members.

It is recognized that for minor violations of this policy (such as one of minor offenses against the Social Media policy) which are not likely to result in the permanent expulsion from USA Team Handball, the Chief Executive – in consultation with the Judicial Committee – may impose sanctions such as temporary suspension of membership or further training.

Where the decision of the Judicial Committee is to permanently expel an individual, that individual has the right to make a written appeal to the Board of Directors of USA Team Handball, whose decision is final.

The appropriate sanction shall be up to the panel (or CEO) in each complaint and the panel will consider the following, in no particular order;

- Any legal proceedings and their outcome.
- If the individual poses a future risk to any person connected with USA Team Handball.
- The seriousness of the offense or act.
- Age of the accused individual when the offense or act occurred.
- Any information produced by the accused individual, or on their behalf, to the effect of their rehabilitation and/or good conduct.
- The interests of USA Team Handball and its members, including Clubs.

A sanction may range from reprimand, formal warning, further training, temporary suspension of membership or permanent expulsion from USA Team Handball.

Where the sanction is less than permanent expulsion the individual or individuals will be expected to undergo further training to their appropriate conduct.

Compliance

USA Team Handball's national office is responsible for providing and communicating to all members in a timely manner the relevant documentation and training regarding USA Team Handball's SafeSport Policy, Procedures & Strategy.

USA Team Handball is responsible for keeping and publishing a current database of banned members under this program, and ensuring those individuals are prevented from participation in USA Team Handball activities.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for reviewing the USA Team Handball policy, in consultation with the Board of Directors, on an annual basis to ensure best practices are being followed regarding safety.

Enforcement

The enforcement of the policies contained in this handbook fall under the jurisdiction of the USA Team Handball CEO and Judicial Committee (with the exception of misconduct over which the U.S. Center for SafeSport has and/or takes jurisdiction over). As such, Article 14 of the USA Team Handball Bylaws governs the enforcement phase and set forth the penalties that may be imposed for any violation of this Safe Sport Policy Handbook, subject to any departures deemed reasonable and necessary by the USA Team Handball Judicial Committee. Complaints filed under this policy shall not be subject to filing fees as outlined in Section 14.4 of the USA Team Handball Bylaws.

USA Team Handball's Bylaws can be found at: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Team-Handball/About/Governance/Corporate-Documents>.

Neither civil nor criminal statutes of limitation apply to reports of cases of misconduct under the jurisdiction of the USA Team Handball Safe Sport Hearing and Appeals Committee.

Notwithstanding the above, USA Team Handball will mirror and reflect any sanctions imposed by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, whether permanent or temporary. Any person who is a USA Team Handball member or a Participant under these policies and/or the rules of the U.S. Center for SafeSport, is subject to the rules, policies, and procedures of the U.S. Center for SafeSport and will submit, without reservation or condition, to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport for the resolution of any alleged violations of those rules, policies, or procedures, as they may be amended from time to time. Violations adjudicated by the U.S. Center for SafeSport may not be appealed through the USA Team Handball procedures referenced in this policy and are subject to the U.S. Center for SafeSport's rules, policies, and procedures.

Monitoring

The most important element of this SafeSport Strategy is the ability for all Participants, not limited to but including members, employees, volunteers, and coaches to be actively involved in monitoring safety.

USA Team Handball will appoint a member of its staff to be responsible for the SafeSport Policy, Procedures and Strategy. This staff member will serve as the point of contact for the USOPC, U.S. Center for Safe Sport, Participants and non-Participants, of USA Team Handball. The staff member will monitor and actively respond or take appropriate action for all inquiries sent to the USA Team Handball SafeSport customer service inbox of help@usateamhandball.org.

Local Affiliated Organizations

Each club which is a registered member club of USA Team Handball is requested to designate their responsible SafeSport officer(s) within the club, commencing on their next renewal of

membership of USA Team Handball from the activation of this policy. The club shall provide in writing the name(s) and contact information of its SafeSport officer(s) to the designated USA Team Handball staff member. USA Team Handball is responsible for maintaining a current database of responsible contacts in the clubs.

This named individual will have responsibility for championing the USA Team Handball SafeSport strategy within the club, and for providing informational materials and training to constituents of the club.

Clubs are mandated to ensure:

- that each coach has undergone the required background screening and has proper USA Team Handball coaching accreditation before allowing contact with players
- that any individuals involved in the operations of the club are USA Team Handball members AND have passed a current background check before having any contact with minors
- that all participants, including parents of minor participants, have access to Safe Sport training materials provided by The U.S. Center for SafeSport and USA Team Handball, and those Adult Participants required to complete the SafeSport Trained Core have done so.
- that each team and member adheres to USA Team Handball's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy

Clubs should promptly report any violation of these policies to the designated USA Team Handball staff member.

Criminal Background Check

Aforementioned USA Team Handball Adult Participants over the age of 18 who will come into contact with athletes are required to undergo a confidential background screening, at his or her expense, biannually with supplemental checks in the off-years. A successfully passed background screen is required prior to competition or contact with athletes. In the case for USA Team Handball Staff, a passed background screen is a condition of employment. For all applicable individuals, a background screening is required prior to starting the new role. All athletes and alternates, training partners, and guides 18 years of age or older who are selected by USA Team Handball to participate in national or international team, or Delegation Events, or train at any Olympic & Paralympic Training Center, USOPC High Performance Training Center, or a USA Team Handball Training Site, a passed background screen is required.

A background screen is not required for a minor. An individual that turns 18 must undergo a background screening within 30 days after their 18th birthday.

USA Team Handball uses NCSI for its background checks. NCSI is the background check service recommended by the USOPC.

Background Check Components

- A. All full background check screens will include at least the following search components:
 - 1. Social Security Number validation or suitable alternative identification verification process as determined by the background check vendor;
 - 2. Name and address history records;
 - 3. Two independent Multi-Jurisdictional Criminal Database searches covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
 - 4. Federal District Courts search for each name used and district where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past seven years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable;
 - 5. County Criminal Records for each name used and county where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past seven years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable for each county searched;
 - 6. National Sex Offender Registry database search of all available states, plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
 - 7. Multiple National Watch Lists;
 - 8. SafeSport Disciplinary Records once automated;
 - 9. Comprehensive International Records search U.S. citizens who have lived outside of the United States for six consecutive months in any one country, during the past seven years;
 - 10. Motor Vehicle Records of at least a three-year history in the state of licensure; (if driving is required for position);
- B. Supplemental Background Checks. All supplemental off-year background check screens will be conducted using at least the following search components:
 - 1. Multi-Jurisdictional criminal database covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico
 - 2. Sex Offender Registry database searches of all available states, plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico; and
 - 3. SafeSport Disciplinary Records.

Training Sites

Each USA Team Handball Training Site shall require criminal background checks in compliance with the background search components for those individuals it formally authorizes, approves

or appoints (a) to serve in a position of authority over athletes, or (b) to have regular contact with athletes.

The term “USA Team Handball Training Site” refers to any facility/location that is used by USA Team Handball or its national team athletes for competitions and/or training, recovery or coaching purposes.

Media

Individuals affiliated with the media, who are authorized or credentialed by USA Team Handball to access a Training Site or attend a competition ran by USA Team Handball are required to undergo a criminal background check if they have unsupervised one-on-one interactions with athletes.

Employees, Agents, Third-Party Vendors/Contractors

Contracts with third-party vendors/contractors that are (a) in a position of authority over or (b) in regular contact with athletes must include the background check requirements set forth in this policy. The contracts shall also specify that certification must be provided by the vendor/contractor upon request by USA Team Handball, to establish that the mandated background checks were conducted.

Any individual who is an employee, contractor, or agent of the NGB is prohibited from assisting a member or former member in obtaining a new job (except for the routine transmission of administrative and personnel files) if the individual knows that that member or former member violated the policies or procedures of the Center related to sexual misconduct or was convicted of a crime involving sexual misconduct with a minor in violation of applicable law or the policies or procedures of the Center.

Partner Programs

When partnering with community organizations for events, USA Team Handball shall ensure that the partnership agreement includes language regarding background check requirements. The agreements shall also specify that certification must be provided by the community organization upon request by USA Team Handball, to establish that the mandated background checks were conducted.

Failure and Red Lights

The existence of a background screening resulting in a red light must be kept confidential between USA Team Handball, the club and the individual.

- A. Any USA Team Handball-initiated background check that results in a report of a disposition or resolution of a criminal proceeding, other than an adjudication of not guilty, for any of the below criminal offenses will be subject to USA Team Handball's policies and procedures to determine the individual's level of access and involvement. This shall include but is not limited to: an adjudication of guilt or admission to a criminal violation, a plea to the charge or a lesser included offense, a plea of no contest, any plea analogous to an Alford or Kennedy plea, the disposition of the proceeding through a diversionary program, deferred adjudication, deferred prosecution, disposition of supervision, conditional dismissal, juvenile delinquency adjudication, or similar arrangement, or the existence of an ongoing criminal investigation, a warrant for arrest, or any pending charges.
4. Any felony, as defined as any criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for more than one year.
 5. Any misdemeanor involving:
 - a) All sexual crimes, criminal offenses of a sexual nature to include but not limited to; rape, child molestation, sexual battery, lewd conduct, possession and distribution of child pornography, possession and distribution of obscene material, prostitution, indecent exposure, public indecency, and any sex offender registrant;
 - b) Any drug related offenses;
 - c) Harm to a minor and vulnerable person, including, but not limited to, offenses such as child abandonment, child endangerment/neglect/abuse, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and DUI with a minor;
 - d) Violence against a person (including crimes involving firearms and domestic violence);
 - e) Stalking, harassment, blackmail, violation of a protection order and/or threats;
 - f) Destruction of property, including arson, vandalism, and criminal mischief; and
 - g) Animal abuse or neglect.
- B. USA Team Handball must comply with the USOPC Background Check Policy and Procedures as it relates to situations under which a secondary review of USA Team Handball determination will be conducted by the USOPC.

Appeals

On notification of a red light, the individual has five days to submit their appeal in writing to the Chief Executive (or in the case of the Chief Executive is absent, the President). USA Team Handball will reply within 28 days of any appeal.

For employees of USA Team Handball, the CEO and President shall hear the appeal of a background screening resulting in a red light, and his or her decision will be final with no right of further appeal.

For all others, the USA Team Handball Judicial Committee will hear the appeal and their decision will be final with no further right of appeal.

If an appeal is denied, the balance of any membership fees for a remaining term will be refunded and the individual will face a permanent ban from membership with USA Team Handball.

All directors and employees of USA Team Handball shall also undergo background screening every two years, with the same restrictions above imposed upon them if so applicable. All USA Team Handball sanctioned event volunteers that will have significant exposure to minors will also be required to pass a background screening.

USA Team Handball will deem non-consent to a background check as a failure of the background check, and such individuals will be permanently expelled from and denied association or participation with USA Team Handball, unless and until a background check is completed.

USA Team Handball requests that all clubs work with USA Team Handball staff to help ensure that background screening is conducted on all covered individuals related to their club.

Clubs are responsible for supervising the program for events sanctioned in their area. USA Team Handball does this for the following reasons:

- To deter offenders from interest in USA Team Handball to the extent where known offenders do not have access to offend through the medium of USA Team Handball.
- To deter offenders not yet caught from interest in USA Team Handball to facilitate their offending because USA Team Handball is taking steps to protect its members.

Definition of Sexual Misconduct

It is a violation of USATH's Athlete Safety Policy for a Participant to engage in Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct offenses include, but are not limited to: 1. Sexual or Gender-related Harassment, 2. Non-consensual Sexual Contact (or attempts to commit the same), 3. Non-consensual Sexual Intercourse (or attempts to commit the same), 4. Sexual Exploitation, 5. Bullying or hazing, or other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.

1. Sexual or Gender-related Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, graphic, physical, or otherwise, when the conditions outlined in (a) and/or (b), below, are present.

Sexual harassment includes harassment related to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, which may include acts of aggression, intimidation, or hostility, whether verbal or non-verbal, graphic, physical, or otherwise, even if the acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature, when the conditions outlined in (a) and/or (b), below, are present.

- a. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of any person's employment, standing in sport, or participation in Events, sports programs and/or activities; or when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for sporting decisions affecting the individual (often referred to as "quid pro quo" harassment); or
- b. Such conduct creates a hostile environment. A "hostile environment" exists when the conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, and/or pervasive such that it interferes with, limits, or deprives any individual of the opportunity to participate in any program or activity. Conduct must be deemed severe, persistent, or pervasive from both a subjective and an objective perspective. Whether a hostile environment exists depends on the totality of known circumstances, including, but not limited to:
 - i. The frequency, nature, and severity of the conduct;
 - ii. Whether the conduct was physically threatening;
 - iii. The effect of the conduct on the Claimant's mental or emotional state;
 - iv. Whether the conduct was directed at more than one person;
 - v. Whether the conduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct;
 - vi. Whether the conduct unreasonably interfered with any person's educational or work performance and/or sport programs or activities; and
 - vii. Whether the conduct implicates concerns related to protected speech.

A hostile environment can be created by persistent or pervasive conduct or by a single or isolated incident that is sufficiently severe. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment, particularly if the conduct is physical. A single incident of sexual contact without Consent, for example, may be sufficiently severe to constitute a hostile environment. In contrast, the perceived offensiveness of a single verbal or written expression, standing alone, is typically not sufficient to constitute a hostile environment.

2. Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

It is a violation of this policy for a Participant to engage in Sexual Contact without Consent.

Sexual Contact is any intentional touching of a sexual nature, however slight, with any object or body part (as described below), by a person upon another person. Sexual Contact includes but is not limited to: (a) kissing, (b) intentional touching of the breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals, whether clothed or unclothed, or intentionally touching of another with any of these body parts; and (c) making another touch themselves, the Participant, or someone else with or on any of these body parts.

3. Nonconsensual Sexual Intercourse

It is a violation of this policy for a Participant to engage in Sexual Intercourse without Consent.

Sexual intercourse is any penetration, however slight, with any object or body part (as described below), by a person upon another person. Sexual Intercourse includes (a) vaginal penetration by

a penis, object, tongue, or finger; (b) anal penetration by a penis, object, tongue, or finger; and (c) any contact, no matter how slight, between the mouth of one person and the genitalia of another person.

4. Sexual Exploitation

It is a violation of this policy for a Participant to engage in Sexual Exploitation. Sexual Exploitation occurs when a Participant purposely or knowingly:

- a. Allows third parties to observe private sexual activity from a hidden location (e.g., closet) or through electronic means (e.g., Skype or live-streaming of images) without Consent of all parties involved in the sexual activity.
- b. Records or photographs private sexual activity and/or a person's intimate parts (including genitalia, groin, breasts or buttocks) without Consent of all parties in the recording or photo.
- c. Engages in voyeurism (e.g., watching private sexual activity or viewing another person's intimate parts when that person would have a reasonable expectation of privacy), without Consent of all parties being viewed.
- d. Disseminates, shows or posts images of private sexual activity and/or a person's intimate parts (including genitalia, groin, breasts or buttocks) without prior Consent of the person depicted in the images.
- e. Intentionally exposes another person to a sexually transmitted infection or virus without that person's knowledge.
- f. Engages in prostituting or trafficking another person.

5. Bullying, Hazing, or Other Inappropriate Conduct of a Sexual Nature

It is a violation of this policy for a Participant to engage in bullying, hazing, and other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, as further defined in the corresponding sections below.

Definition of Emotional and Physical Abuse and Misconduct

USA Team Handball defines athlete abuse as any non-accidental action that causes injury or harm to a USA Team Handball registered member athlete, including but not limited to sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, hazing, bullying, harassment and threats. USA Team Handball follows the definitions of misconduct as outlined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Code published at: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/response-and-resolution/>

Physical Abuse Policy

Physical Misconduct is any intentional contact or noncontact behavior that causes, or reasonably threatens to cause, physical harm to another person. Examples of physical misconduct may include, without limitation:

- a. Contact violations
Punching, beating, biting, striking, strangling or slapping another; intentionally hitting another with objects, such as sporting equipment; encouraging or knowingly permitting an Athlete to return to play prematurely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional.
- b. Non-contact violations
Isolating a person in a confined space, such as locking an Athlete in a small space; forcing an Athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g., requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface); withholding, recommending against, or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep; providing alcohol to a person under the legal drinking age; providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to another.
- c. Criminal Conduct
Physical Misconduct includes any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).
- d. Exclusion
Physical Misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching and kicking are well regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in swimming. Physical Misconduct also does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of Participant's participation.

Emotional Abuse Policy

Emotional Misconduct includes

- a) Verbal Acts, b) Physical Acts, c) Acts that Deny Attention or Support, d) Criminal Conduct, and/or e) Stalking. Emotional Misconduct is determined by the objective behaviors, not whether harm is intended or results from the behavior.
- a. Verbal Acts: Repeatedly and excessively verbally assaulting or attacking someone personally in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.

- b. Physical Acts: Repeated and/or severe physically aggressive behaviors, including but not limited to, throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at or in the presence of others, punching walls, windows or other objects.
- c. Acts that Deny Attention or Support: Ignoring or isolating a person for extended periods of time, including routinely or arbitrarily excluding a Participant from practice.
- d. Criminal Conduct: Emotional Misconduct includes any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).
- e. Stalking occurs when a person purposefully engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific person, and knows or should know, that the course of conduct would cause a reasonable person to
 - i. fear for their safety,
 - ii. the safety of a third person, or
 - iii. to experience substantial emotional distress. "Course of conduct" means at least two or more acts, in which a person directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about another person, or interferes with another person's property. "Substantial emotional distress" means significant mental suffering or anguish. Stalking also includes "cyber-stalking," wherein a person stalks another using electronic media, such as the internet, social networks, blogs, cell phones, texts, or other similar devices or forms of contact.
- f. Exclusion: Emotional Misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improved Athlete performance. Emotional Misconduct also does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of Participant's participation.

Bullying

Repeated and/or severe behavior(s) that are (a) aggressive (b) directed at a Minor, and (c) intended or likely to hurt, control, or diminish the Minor emotionally, physically or sexually. Bullying-like behaviors directed at adults are addressed under other forms of misconduct, such as Hazing and/or Harassment. Examples of bullying behavior may include, without limitation, repeated and/or severe:

- a. Physical
 - Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, strangling, slapping, spitting at, or throwing objects (such as sporting equipment) at another person.
- b. Verbal
 - Ridiculing, taunting, name-calling or intimidating or threatening to cause someone harm.
- c. Social, including cyberbullying

Use of rumors or false statements about someone to diminish that person's reputation; using electronic communications, social media or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate someone; socially excluding someone and asking others to do the same.

d. Sexual

Ridiculing or taunting based on gender or sexual orientation (real or perceived), gender traits or behavior, or teasing someone about their looks or behavior as it relates to sexual attractiveness.

e. Criminal Conduct

Bullying Behavior includes any conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.

f. Exclusion

Conduct may not rise to the level of Bullying Behavior if it is merely rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons who perceive they have incompatible views and/or positions. Bullying does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance.

Harassment

Repeated and/or severe conduct that

- a. causes fear, humiliation or annoyance,
- b. offends or degrades,
- c. creates a hostile environment (as defined above), or
- d. reflects discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual or group based on age, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, national origin, or mental or physical disability; or
- e. any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

Whether conduct is harassing depends on the totality of the circumstances, including the nature, frequency, intensity, location, context, and duration of the behavior. Conduct may not rise to the level of Harassment if it is merely rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons who perceive they have incompatible views and/or positions. Harassment does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance.

Aiding and Abetting

Aiding and Abetting occurs when one aids, assists, facilitates, promotes, or encourages the commission of Prohibited Conduct by a Participant, including but not limited to, knowingly:

1. Allowing any person who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by the Center to be in any way associated with or employed by an organization affiliated with or holding itself out as affiliated with an NGB, LAO, HPMO, the USOPC, or the Olympic & Paralympic Movement;
2. Allowing any person who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by the Center to coach or instruct Participants;
3. Allowing any person who has been identified as ineligible by the Center to have ownership interest in a facility, an organization, or its related entities, if that facility/organization/related entity is affiliated with or holds itself out as affiliated with USATH or LAOs
4. Providing any coaching-related advice or service to an Athlete who has been identified as suspended or otherwise ineligible by the Center;
5. Allowing any person to violate the terms of their suspension or any other sanctions imposed by the Center.

In addition, a Participant also violates the Code if someone acts on behalf of the Participant to engage in Aiding or Abetting, or if the guardian, family member, or Advisor of a Participant, including Minor Participants, engages in Aiding or Abetting.

Hazing and Team Initiation Ceremonies

Any conduct that subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, humiliate, degrade or intimidate the person as a condition of joining or being socially accepted by a group, team, or organization. Purported Consent by the person subjected to Hazing is not a defense, regardless of the person's perceived willingness to cooperate or participate. Examples of Hazing include:

- a. Contact acts: Tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining another person; beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault.
- b. Non-contact acts: Requiring or forcing the consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs or other substances, including participation in binge drinking and drinking games; personal servitude; requiring social actions (e.g., wearing inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g., public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule; excessive training requirements demanded of only particular individuals on a team that serve no reasonable or productive training purpose; sleep deprivation; otherwise unnecessary schedule disruptions; withholding of water and/or food; restrictions on personal hygiene.
- c. Sexualized acts: Actual or simulated conduct of a sexual nature.
- d. Criminal acts: Any act or conduct that constitutes hazing under applicable federal or state law.
- e. Exclusion: Conduct may not rise to the level of Hazing if it is merely rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons who perceive they have incompatible views and/or positions. Hazing does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement,

physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved Athlete performance.

Threats

A threat is an expressed wish to physically injure or cause harm to someone else. This may be expressed in any form – physically, verbally or via electronic means. Threats may be directed at a participant or alternatively may be directed via a third party.

Upon proof of violation of USA Team Handball's Threats policy the offender will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.