

USA Fencing Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish the United States Fencing Association's ("USFA") expectations for all those engaged in this great sport of fencing. It is a set of policies intended to promote a positive environment and good sportsmanship. By practicing these shared values we can create a culture that empowers and supports all members of the fencing community.

Except as provided by law, sanctions implemented by organizations outside of USFA, including international bodies such as FIE or WAS, do not limit the applicability of this Code of Conduct or the ability of USFA to impose additional sanctions. This includes sanctions for conduct that occurs at international events. USFA's authority under this Code of Conduct and other references such as the Athlete Handbook are not conditional in any way on any sanctions applied for international conduct, including if those international sanctions are set aside, reversed on appeal, or in any other way not implemented.

This Code of Conduct applies to the following individuals at all times: all members of USFA, Board of Directors members, officers (including division officers), committee members, task force members, working group members, resource team members, hearing panel members, volunteers, employees of USFA, officials, athletes, coaches, spectators, contractors, and others appointed or authorized to act on behalf of the USFA (collectively, "Members").

The USFA's Codes of Conduct requires all participants in USFA activities to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As Members of USFA, we all must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Specifically, compliance with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act ("the Act"), the USOPC Bylaws, all USFA policies and procedures, and state and federal laws.

As a Member of USFA, you are committed to fair competition and respect for other Members, including athletes, coaches, referees, volunteers, tournament officials, spectators, and fans. You understand that sportsmanship is a key tenant of competition and will exhibit the qualities of sportsmanship at all times.

This Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to, following the below requirements:

- Act in a sportsmanlike manner consistent with the spirit of fair play and responsible conduct;
- Conduct yourself in a dignified, professional manner relating to emotions, language, attitude, and actions.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all opponents, coaches, referees, officials, administrators, parents, fencers and spectators regardless of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

- Engage in no verbal, written, or physical threats or have any unwanted physical contact with others.
- Respect your competitors and other members of the fencing community in person, via electronic or phone communication, or social media. Accordingly, you will not bully, harass or otherwise be disrespectful or disparaging to others.
- Act appropriately and remain orderly so as to not disturb the smooth running of any competition, regardless of the outcome, and not taunt or disturb others.
- Support the referees, coaches, and event organizers by trusting their judgment and integrity so as to not affect the good order of any competition.
- Refrain from engaging or encourage others to engage in malicious or threatening language either verbally or in writing. To include hard copy, electronic communication, e-mail or on any social media sites. Refrain from tagging individuals in social media posts with the intent to harass.
- Remember that at all times you are an ambassador for the sport of fencing, whether in or out of competition.
- Report all Code of Conduct violations.
- Support clean competition, including an environment free of doping, and will follow all applicable rules related to anti-doping as established by the United States Anti-Doping Agency, the World Anti-Doping Agency and the Federation International d'Esgrime.
- Abide by all applicable USA Fencing rules and regulations, including but not limited to the Athlete Handbook, and Fencing Rulebook, FenceSafe Handbook, USA Fencing MAAPP, and the US Center for SafeSport Code.
- Adhere to the rules governing fair play and competitive manipulation per the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions, and the International Paralympic Committee Code of Ethics.
- Adhere to all applicable state, federal, and foreign laws, as applicable, including those governing the possession and use of drugs and alcohol and providing of drugs to any person and alcohol to minors.
- Refrain from physically contacting a referee, tournament organizer, or others in any way that can be interpreted as unwelcome or in an aggressive or confrontational manner.
- Act as a role model by positively supporting athletes and not shouting instructions that disturb order on the strip

- Encourage all competitors in a positive manner, and remember that in competition, the use of profanity and objectionable gestures are offensive and are prohibited.
- No USFA employee, contractor, or agent of USFA shall assist 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 the Member or former Member violated policies or procedures of the US Center for SafeSport related to sexual misconduct or was convicted of a crime involving sexual misconduct with a minor in violation of applicable laws or the policies or procedures of the US Center for SafeSport per Section 220524(a)(10) of the Act.

REPORTING & RESOLUTION

A violation of this Code of Conduct may be grounds for action, which could result in sanctions up to and including termination of membership.

Code of Conduct violations must be reported promptly through our online reporting portal which can be accessed here, to the Athlete Safety & Compliance Manager at c.pachuta@usafencing.org, or to the Grievance and Discipline Committee at Grievance@usafencing.org. Reporters are permitted to submit reports anonymously. All reports will be reviewed and resolved per our Complaint and Hearing Procedures which can be found here. The Grievance and Discipline Committee in coordination with the USFA Senior Manager of Compliance (“Manager”) will determine whether to resolve the matter via an informal compromise or mediation or proceed with formal disciplinary action. If an informal compromise or mediation is pursued, the Manager will investigate and provide notice of a resolution. If formal disciplinary action is pursued, the matter will be decided by a panel of disinterested Members pursuant to the Complaint and Hearing Procedures. Respondents will be afforded an opportunity to be heard on the merits before the panel prior to the imposition of any sanctions. Athlete Representatives will make up 33.3% of the panel. Temporary measures, such as a temporary suspension, may be imposed as necessary for the good of the sport of fencing and the protection of USFA or its Members. For questions regarding procedural review of complaints, please reach out to Athlete Safety & Compliance Manager at c.pachuta@usafencing.org.

ANTI-RETALIATION

It is the right and responsibility of all Members to report violations or suspected violations of this Code of Conduct. All Members, good faith reporters or any person who participates or is involved in the investigation or adjudication of claims of violations (“Covered Third-Persons”) is protected under this Code of Conduct from retaliation. An individual who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith or a Covered Third-Person is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership.

No individual who in good faith reports a violation of the Codes of Conduct shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse membership consequences. “Retaliation” means any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, including removal

from a training facility, reduced coaching or training, reduced meals or housing, and removal from competition, carried out against a protected individual as a result of any communication, including the filing of a formal complaint, by the protected individual relating to the allegation of physical abuse, sexual harassment, or emotional abuse with (a) the US Center for SafeSport (b) a coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official associated with the corporation (c) the Attorney General (d) a Federal or State law enforcement agency (e) the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or (f) Congress.

Retaliation may be present even where there is a finding that no violation occurred, but retaliation does not include good-faith actions lawfully pursued in response to a report of a violation. In addition, no Member nor USFA itself 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 the Ted Stevens Act.

A copy of the full USFA Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy can be found [here](#).

ACTING IN GOOD FAITH

Anyone reporting a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and that prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and will be considered a Code of Conduct violation.

SANCTIONS

USFA may impose the following disciplinary measures in furtherance of this Code of Conduct:

- a) Warning;
- b) Reprimand;
- c) Establish a period of probation, with or without conditions;
- d) Deny, grant, suspend, or restore the eligibility or right to participate;
- e) Public censure;
- f) Private censure;
- g) Deny, grant, suspend or restore membership in USFA for a definite or indefinite period of time, with or without terms of probation, or expel any member of USFA, including, without limitation, any administrator, athlete, coach, trainer, manager, official, officer, Board Member, spectator, chair or member of any committee or sub-committee;
- h) Assess actual costs to the prevailing party;
- i) Forfeiture of tournament results;
- j) Assess sanctions in any combination of the foregoing or assess any other remedies, including reasonable fines, deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

RESOURCES

For information on the Code of Conduct, including any of its provisions, contact Athlete Safety and Compliance Manager at c.pachuta@usafencing.org or EthicsCommittee@usafencing.org.

USOPC INTEGRITY UNIT - Through its Speak Up Policy, the USOPC Ethics and Compliance team seeks to empower athletes, USOPC employees and volunteers, NGB employees and volunteers, and other individuals within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement to raise and report their concerns.

Any individual may report concerns confidentially, or anonymously, online using the USOPC Integrity Portal.

Team USA Athletes:

ATHLETE OMBUDS: The Athlete Ombuds Office provides free cost-free, independent, and confidential advice regarding Team USA athlete rights, grievance procedures and any other guidance pertaining to selection procedures and can assist in mediating disputes between athletes and USFA.

To contact the Athlete Ombuds Office:

Website: <https://www.teamusa.org/athlete-ombuds>

Phone: (719) 866-5000

E-mail: ombudsman@usathlete.org

USFA REPORTING PORTAL - For additional resources and to access the USFA online reporting portal please visit: <https://www.usafencing.org/fencesafe-report>