



---

# USA CURLING SAFESPORT HANDBOOK

---

**Abuse and Harassment Guidelines P.4-8**  
**Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy P.9-17**  
**Educational Awareness and Training P.18-19**  
**Screening Program P.20-21**  
**Reporting Policy P.22-26**

**Updated: JANUARY 2022**

10/16/2021-updated urls, email addresses, MyUSACurling/Sport80

01 01 2022 - New MAAPP released under separate cover



safesport [usacurling.org](http://usacurling.org)

2685 Vikings Circle Suite 200, Eagan, MN  
55121 [www.usacurling.org/safesport](http://www.usacurling.org/safesport)  
(715) 344-1199 or (888) CURLERS

## INTRODUCTION

The United States Curling Association (USCA) is committed to encouraging participation and the pursuit of excellence at all levels of the sport. In order to create a safe and positive environment in which curlers can excel, the USCA promotes good sportsmanship and encourages qualities of mutual respect, courtesy, and tolerance. Abuse or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

The *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* is designed to help protect athletes, volunteers, staff, and others while participating in events conducted under the auspices of the USCA, including championships, curling camps, and educational clinics. Among others, it also applies to individuals who have been certified by the USCA as a coach, instructor, official, or ice technician. This policy encompasses requirements from the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, which became federal law on February 14, 2018.

The USCA and all member organizations, along with individuals who are members, employees, or volunteers in these organizations must comply with the policy and procedures outlined in this document including investigation and, as applicable, resolution procedures under the auspices of the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Questions can be directed to USA Curling at [safesport@usacurling.org](mailto:safesport@usacurling.org)



Special thanks are given to  
The Chicago Community Trust and  
World Curling Federation  
for their generous financial support  
of this program.



## Definitions

**Applicable Adults:** Adults to whom items regarding minor athlete abuse prevention in Section 2 of the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* apply are referred to as Applicable Adults. Applicable Adults always include:

- Any adult authorized by the USCA to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor (e.g., coaches); and
- Adult staff of USA Curling and USCA board members.

Some aspects of the policy also directly apply to all adult members of organizations that are members of the USCA. Specific requirements that are applicable to USCA member organizations are detailed in Section 2. Applicable Adults are also Covered Individuals, but all Covered Individuals are not necessarily Applicable Adults.

**Covered Individuals:** Any individual who currently is, or was at the time of a possible violation of the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook*, (a) within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of the USCA or that of a USCA member organization; (b) an athlete or non-athlete participant that the USCA formally authorizes, approves, or appoints to a position of authority over athletes or to have frequent contact with athletes; or (c) otherwise identified in this document as a Covered Individual. Covered individuals also fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (Center) and its policies. In some instances, actions committed prior to involvement with curling or other Olympic sports (e.g., past sexually-based convictions) will cause these Covered Individuals to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Center and/or the USCA. Not all Covered Individuals are also Applicable Adults.

**Minors:** Individuals who are under the age of 18. The phrase “amateur athlete who is a minor” refers only to minors involved in the sport of curling. This policy is limited to activities within the sport of curling, which, in some instances, includes travel to and from a venue.

**U.S. Curling Association (USCA):** The national governing body for the sport of curling. The USCA does business as USA Curling.

## SECTION 1: ABUSE AND HARASSMENT GUIDELINES

### Covered Individuals

Individuals covered under the policy include the following:

- Employees of USA Curling and employees of contractors engaged by USA Curling;
- U.S. Curling Association board members and other national and international representatives of the organization;
- Volunteers serving on committees, operational groups, and selection panels recognized by the national organization;
- Volunteers for and participants in USA Curling events, camps, and other USA Curling programs (including athletes, coaches, course conductors, ice technicians, instructors, officials, and organizers);
- Individuals who have been certified by USA Curling as a coach, instructor, official, or ice technician;
- Members of national, state, regional, and local USCA member organizations (e.g., curling clubs);
- Individuals authorized by member organizations to have regular contact with minors;
- Staff and boards of national, state, regional, and local USCA member organizations;
- All non-athletes who are authorized by USA Curling to reside, train, or work at an Olympic Training Center; and
- All athletes receiving funding from USA Curling, representing the United States in curling at world championship events, and/or designated for the required USADA testing pool.

All member organizations are required to adopt prevention policies as outlined in Section 2 to limit one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. Member organizations are also required to ensure individuals identified in Section 3 complete online abuse and harassment training through the U.S. Center for SafeSport (Center).

All covered individuals shall refrain from misconduct including: sexual misconduct, physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, harassment, and hazing. Each of these prohibited behaviors is outlined below. Covered individuals are obligated to report actual or perceived violations of the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* pursuant to Section 5.

Please note: Certification of coaches, instructors, officials, and ice makers by the USCA does not make those individuals agents or employees of the USCA, and the USCA is not liable for actions of such persons. The USCA's duty is limited to taking appropriate action to screen such individuals under the circumstances set forth in this Handbook, to investigate allegations, to revoke certification or impose other sanctions where appropriate, and to report complaints to appropriate authorities, the Center, or to local club personnel or parents where appropriate.

## **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual misconduct as defined by the US Center for SafeSport in the *SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement (Code)* is prohibited. The Center has exclusive authority to investigate and resolve conduct involving (a) sexual misconduct; (b) prohibited conduct under the Code that is reasonably related to the underlying allegation of sexual misconduct, and (c) retaliation related to an allegation of sexual misconduct. The most current definitions as found in the Code take precedence over what is published in this Handbook should the definitions published by the Center change. The current version of the Code can be found online at [Read the SafeSport Code | U.S. Center for SafeSport \(uscenterforsafesport.org\)](https://www.uscenterforsafesport.org).

## **Sexual Misconduct**

### **(1) Generally**

Sexual misconduct offenses include:

- a. Sexual Conduct (or attempts to commit the same), without Consent.
- b. Sexual Conduct (or attempts to commit the same), where there is a Power Imbalance, regardless of purported Consent.
- c. Sexual Harassment.
- d. An Intimate Relationship involving a person in a Position of Power where a Power Imbalance exists.

### **(2) Sexual misconduct involving Minors**

Regardless of any purported Consent, a sexual misconduct offense involving a Minor includes:

- a. Sexual Conduct (or attempt to commit the same) between a Covered Adult and a Minor where the age difference is three or more years.
- b. Sexual Conduct (or attempt to commit the same) between a Covered Adult and a Minor where the age difference is less than three years, but a Power Imbalance exists.
- c. An Intimate Relationship (or attempt to establish the same) between a Covered Adult and a Minor where the age difference is three or more years and a Power Imbalance exists.
- d. Sexual Conduct between a Covered Minor and another Minor if: (1) the age difference is three or more years, or (2) there is a Power Imbalance based on the totality of the circumstances.

### **(3) Child sexual abuse**

A Covered Individual shall not engage in any behavior that constitutes child sexual abuse as defined by federal or applicable state law.

### **(4) Criminal Disposition**

It is a violation of the *Code* for a Covered Individual to be convicted of or subject to a

Criminal Disposition for a crime involving (a) any form of sexual misconduct or (b) a Minor.

(5) **Other**

A Covered Individual shall not engage in any other form of sexual misconduct, including Bullying Behaviors or Hazing of a sexual nature.

More information on conduct reasonably related to sexual misconduct and retaliation, as well as definitions of terms used above, can be found in the most recent version of the *SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement*.

Please Note: Romantic or sexual relationships, beginning during the sport relationship, between athletes and those individuals with direct supervisory or evaluative control, or who are in a position of power and trust over the athlete, are prohibited. Except in limited circumstances where no imbalance of power exists, coaches have this direct supervisory or evaluative control and are in a position of power and trust over the individuals they coach.

**Physical Abuse**<sup>1</sup>

Physical abuse includes:

- (1) Deliberate contact or non-contact conduct intended to and that results in, or reasonably threatens to cause, physical harm; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

Examples of contact offenses prohibited by this Handbook include, but are not limited to: punching, beating, biting, striking, choking, or slapping. Prohibited non-contact offenses include, but are not limited to, isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a locker); 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); and withholding, recommending against, or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention, or sleep.

Physical abuse does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improving athlete performance.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bullying, harassment and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of physical abuse.

## **Emotional Abuse**<sup>2</sup>

Emotional abuse includes:

- (1) A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that causes emotional or psychological harm; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).

Examples of prohibited verbal acts include a pattern of verbal behaviors that attack an athlete personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat, or disgusting) or repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular participant in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose. Prohibited physical acts include, but are not limited to, a pattern of physically aggressive behaviors, such as throwing equipment in the presence of participants or punching walls or other objects. Acts that deny attention or support are also prohibited.

Emotional abuse does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline, or improving athletic performance.

## **Bullying**

Bullying includes:

- (1) An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation, or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish, or isolate; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Handbook include, but are not limited to, physical behaviors (e.g., hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an individual) and verbal and emotional behaviors (e.g., teasing, ridiculing, intimidating; spreading rumors or making false statements; and using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate).

Bullying does not include group or team activities that are meant to establish normative team behaviors or promote team cohesion. For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen within the normal scope of the coach/athlete relationship.

Please note: While bullying often occurs between peers, particularly among minor athletes, it is a violation of this policy if a coach or other responsible adult knows of the bullying behavior but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the targeted individuals.

---

<sup>2</sup> Bullying, harassment, and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of emotional abuse.

## **Harassment**

Harassment includes:

- (1) A repeated pattern of behavior that (a) is intended to cause fear or humiliation, (b) offends or degrades, (c) creates a hostile environment, or (d) reflects discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, and/or other protected classes; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

Examples of harassment prohibited by this Handbook include, but are not limited to, making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits; displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols related to religion or race; and withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her sexual orientation.

## **Hazing**

Hazing includes:

- (1) Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law.

Examples of hazing prohibited by this Handbook include, but are not limited to: forcing or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs; tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an individual; sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature; extreme sleep deprivation; public displays that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule (e.g. public nudity); beating, paddling, or other forms of physical assault; and excessive training requirements focused on individuals or specific members of a team. Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

Please note: While hazing often occurs between peers, particularly among minor athletes, it is a violation of this policy if a coach, or other responsible adult, knows of the hazing behavior but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the targeted individuals.

## **Other Prohibited Conduct**

No individual governed by this Handbook shall:

- (1) Provide alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age; or
- (2) Provide illegal drugs or non prescribed medication to any athlete; or
- (3) Encourage or permit an athlete to return to play pre-maturely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) without the clearance of a medical professional; or
- (4) Consume alcohol while actively coaching minor athletes during an event under the jurisdiction of USA Curling or qualifying events leading to USA Curling competitions (e.g., U18 playdowns, qualification bonspiels leading the Junior Nationals).



## SECTION 2: MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION

The majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations. By reducing such interactions between children and adults, Olympic sports reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. However, one-on-one time with trusted adults is also healthy and valuable for a child. Policies concerning one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships.

[USA Curling's detailed policy for minor athlete abuse prevention \(MAAPP\) can be found here.](#)

**An 'At-A-Glance' of the 2022 MAAPP as presented by the U.S. Center for SafeSport can be found below on pages 10-18 of the USA Curling SafeSport Handbook.**

All organizations that are members of the U.S. Curling Association are required to adopt a minor athlete abuse prevention policy by June 23, 2019. Each policy must, at minimum, include items identified below as applicable to adult members of organizations that are members of the USCA. USCA member organizations are encouraged to include the optional components of USA Curling's policy and/or develop stricter guidelines to help ensure the safety of minors. If a member organization does not develop its own policy that meets the minimum standard, the mandatory components outlined in this document become the default policy of the member organization as of June 23, 2019. While member organizations have the right to revise their policies at any time, all policies must continue to meet the minimum standards outlined in this document.

Parents/guardians of minors are encouraged to actively supervise youth involved in curling during practices, games, competitions, travel, and/or other events. The more parents/guardians are involved, the less likely it is that abuse situations will develop. All parents of youth athletes are also encouraged to take the free online SafeSport training for parents created by the U.S. Center for SafeSport. This course explains issues of misconduct in sport and helps parents ensure their children have a positive and safe, sport experience. [U.S. Center for SafeSport \(safesporttrained.org\)](https://safesporttrained.org) offers access to the free training. Additional educational resources for parents can also be found on the USA Curling website: [RESOURCES FOR PARENTS — USA CURLING](#)

\*USA Curling is also in the process of implementing the online membership and event management system, Sport80 which, through the participant's MyUSACurling profile, has a SafeSport training integration that is accessible and allows for notifications to the individual member when they need new training to stay compliant.

---

## AT-A-GLANCE

### 2022 MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES



In September 2020, the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) published the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) with Mandatory Components that NGBs, PSOs, and the USOPC were required to adopt.

\_\_\_\_\_ adopted its \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

This document is based on the minimum mandatory components of the Center's Model MAAPP. Every Organization may choose to go beyond these minimum requirements and set standards that are stricter. Additionally, Adult Participants must be familiar with their respective Organization's policies and be aware of all requirements.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

---

### REMEMBER:

- If you have Regular Contact with or Authority over a Minor Athlete, or if you are an employee or board member of an NGB, PSO, LAO or the USOPC, you are required to complete the *SafeSport Trained Core* and subsequent Refresher Courses.
- Adult Participants who also are medical providers obligated to complete training can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the *SafeSport Trained Core*.
- Adult Participants must complete training:
  - » Before Regular Contact with a Minor Athlete begins; and
  - » Within the first 45 days of initial membership or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy

## IN-PROGRAM CONTACT

---

As the equation illustrates, all three components (Adult Participant, Minor Athlete, and Related to Participation in Sport) must be present for the MAAPP to apply. If one component is absent, then the interaction or activity would NOT be considered In-Program and thus not covered by the MAAPP.



**1 | ADULT PARTICIPANT:** Any adult (18 years of age or older) who is:

- A** A member or license holder of an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC;
- B** An employee or board member of an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC;
- C** Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC;
- D** Authorized, approved, or appointed by an NGB, PSO, LAO, or USOPC to have Regular Contact with or Authority over Minor Athletes.

**2 | MINOR ATHLETE:** An 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, an NGB, PSO, USOPC, or LAO.

### Common examples of activities **Related to Participation in Sport:**



## 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). Some examples of NGB/PSO/USOPC/LAO members who MAY have Regular Contact with Minor Athletes include:

- Coaches
- Adult Athletes on teams with Minor Athletes
- Volunteers in positions of Regular Contact (e.g., locker room monitors, parent chaperones)
- Athletic Trainers
- Health Professionals
- Officials

**\*\*REMEMBER:** NGB/LAO/PSO/USOPC Staff and Board Members are required to complete the *SafeSport Trained Core/Health Professionals Course* and subsequent Refreshers regardless of whether they have Regular Contact with or Authority over Minor Athletes.

## 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.

# REQUIRED PREVENTION POLICIES



In addition to the above three exceptions there is an overarching Emergency Exception that applies in all areas of the MAAPP.

## MAAPP EXCEPTIONS:

In the MAAPP, there are multiple areas where exceptions have been built into the Required Prevention Policies to address common relationships and situations that occur throughout the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. If an exception applies to a specific policy, it will be listed as a possible exception, along with any additional requirements. The exceptions found in the MAAPP are:

### 1 | **AN EMERGENCY.**

**2 | CLOSE-IN-AGE:** When an Adult Participant does not have Authority over the Minor Athlete and is no more than four years older than the Minor Athlete.

**3 | PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANT (PCA):** When an Adult Participant is a Personal Care Assistant and has met the following requirements:

- The Minor Athlete's parent/guardian must provide written consent to the Organization for the PCA to provide care/work with their Minor Athlete.
- The PCA must complete the required training as defined in the Education & Training Policy.
- The PCA must meet all screening requirements of the Organization.

**4 | DUAL RELATIONSHIPS:** When an Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete that is outside of the sport program. A parent/guardian must provide written consent to the Organization on an annual basis for this exception to be granted.

## ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS POLICY

---

- Policy Jurisdiction: All In-Program Contact.
- All one-on-one interactions between an Adult Participant and Minor Athlete **MUST** be:
  - » Observable
  - » Interruptible
- Exceptions to the One-on-One Interactions Policy:
  - » Emergency Circumstances
  - » Dual Relationships
  - » Close-In-Age
  - » Personal Care Assistant who meets the requirements

## MEETING AND TRAINING SESSIONS

---

- Must follow One-on-One Interactions Policy when Minor Athletes are present.
- Individual Training Sessions.
  - » Policy Jurisdiction: All In-Program Contact.
  - » Consent required from parent/guardian annually. Can be withdrawn at any time.
  - » Parents/Guardians must be allowed to observe.
- One-on-One Interactions Policy Exceptions are allowed for In-Program meetings and individual training sessions.
- Meetings with licensed mental health care professionals and health care providers.
  - » Policy Jurisdiction: At facilities that are partially or fully under the jurisdiction of the Organization.
  - » Meetings do not need to be observable and interruptible if the following requirements are met:
    - a. Door is unlocked.
    - b. Another adult is present in the facility and is aware of the meeting.
    - c. Organization is aware of the meeting.
    - d. The provider obtains appropriate consent as required by law and ethical standards.

## ATHLETIC TRAINING MODALITIES, MESSAGES, AND RUBDOWNS

---

- Must follow One-on-One Interactions Policy.
- Must **ALWAYS** have a second **Adult Participant** in the room during treatment.
- Required consent from parent/guardian that needs to be documented at least annually.
- During treatment Minor Athlete's breast, buttocks, groin, and genitals **MUST** always be covered.
- Parents/Guardians **must** be allowed to attend treatment unless in a restricted area.
- **No** policy exceptions.

## LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

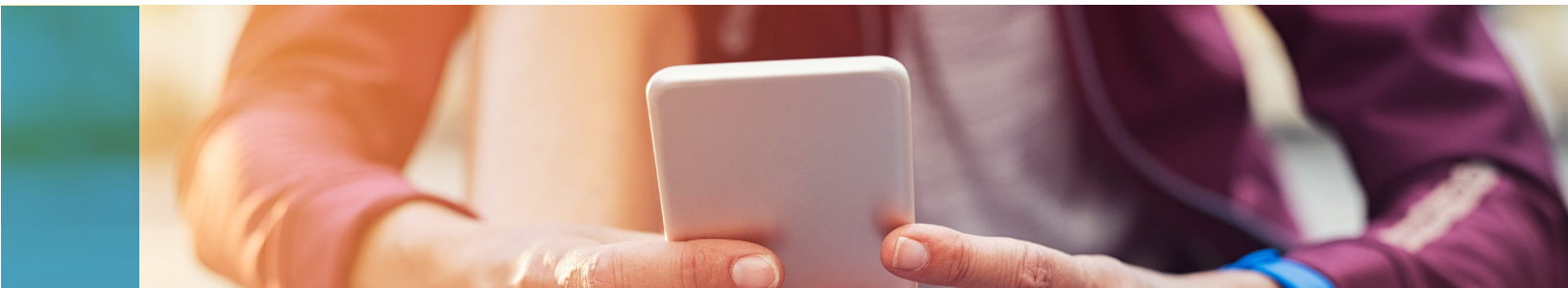
---

- Must follow One-on-One Interactions Policy.
- The photographic or recording capabilities of any device (cell phones, cameras, tablets) cannot be used by any Participant in locker rooms or changing areas during In-Program activities.
- Adult Participants **MUST NOT** change clothes or behave in a way that exposes their breast, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a Minor Athlete.
- Adult Participants **CANNOT** shower with a Minor Athlete unless:
  - » The Adult Participant is an athlete with no Authority over the Minor Athlete and there is no more than four years age difference (Close-in-Age Exception).
  - » The Adult Participant and Minor Athlete are wearing swimwear and the shower is part of a pre- or post-activity rinse.
- Media and Championship Celebration recordings are allowed if they meet specific requirements.
- Monitoring must occur for all locker rooms and changing areas at sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under Organization's jurisdiction.
- A semi-private or private area to change must be provided to all Minor Athletes at sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under the Organization's jurisdiction.

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

---

- Must be Open and Transparent, meaning that:
  - » Communication between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must include a parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant.
  - » This includes all communication started by a Minor Athlete.
- Only electronic platforms that can be Open and Transparent should be used.
- All team communication or communications with multiple Minor Athletes from an Adult Participant must copy or include another Adult Participant, or all the Minor Athletes' parents/guardians.
- All communication must be professional in nature.
- Organizations must honor a parent/guardian's request to discontinue communication with their Minor Athlete unless there is an emergency.
- One-one-One exceptions are allowed.





## TRANSPORTATION

---

- Must follow One-on-One Interactions Policy, unless an exception exists or appropriate consent is obtained.
- In-Program transportation requirements are met if the Adult Participant is accompanied by another Adult Participant or at least two minors.
- One-on-One In-Program travel is permitted between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete when advance written consent is obtained from a parent/guardian on an annual basis. Can be withdrawn at any time.
- Written consent must be obtained from a parent/guardian annually for all transportation sanctioned by the Organization.
- One-on-One Exceptions are allowed.

## LODGING

---

- Must follow One-on-One Interactions Policy.
- An Adult Participant **CANNOT** share a hotel room or otherwise sleep in the same room with a Minor Athlete during In-Program lodging except:
  - » When there is a Dual Relationship and written consent is provided by a parent/guardian prior to the lodging arrangement.
  - » When there is a Close-In-Age Exception and written consent is provided by a parent/guardian prior to the lodging arrangement.
  - » When there is a Personal Care Assistant Exception, all PCA requirements have been met, and written consent is provided by a parent/guardian prior to the lodging arrangement.
- Written consent is required for all In-Program lodging at least annually.
- Adult Participants traveling with an Organization overnight:
  - » Must agree to and sign the Organization's lodging policy annually.
  - » Are assumed to have "Authority" and must comply with the Center's Education & Training Policy.



# RECOMMENDED POLICIES FOR KEEPING YOUNG ATHLETES SAFE

---

## OUT-OF-PROGRAM CONTACT

- Adult Participants should not have Out-of-Program Contact with Minor Athletes, unless an exception exists, or appropriate consent has been obtained.
- Out-of-Program Contact should be avoided even if the contact is not one-on-one.

## GIFTING

- Adult Participants should not give personal gifts to Minor Athletes unless an applicable exception exists (Close-in-Age or Dual Relationship).
- Gifts are permitted if distributed equally for all athletes.
- Gifts that serve a motivational or educational purpose are permitted.

## PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO

- Photographs or videos of athletes should only be taken in public view.
- Must observe generally accepted standards of decency.
- Adult Participants should not share or post photos or videos of Minor Athletes unless proper consent has been obtained from the Minor Athlete and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian.



## SECTION 3: EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS AND TRAINING

Education is a key component of abuse and harassment prevention. In addition to providing information on various types of abuse, training helps enhance knowledge of administrators, volunteers, coaches, and others regarding how to minimize the opportunities for abusive situations to occur.

Individuals/groups required to complete awareness training include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- All coaches, including those at USCA events, championships, and playdowns leading to championship events;
- All newly certified officials, instructors, and ice technicians (as of July 1, 2019);
- The head ice maker at a USA Curling championship or event;
- The chairs of the organizing committees for the USCA U18 and Junior National Championships and qualifying events;
- All course conductors for USA Curling Sport Education classes;
- All adult participants in junior camps and any other junior program receiving financial or administrative support from the USCA;
- All adults who are in any way associated with national, state, regional or local organizations that are members of the USCA (e.g., curling clubs) and who have regular contact with and/or authority over athletes who are minors (this includes, but is not limited to, members, volunteers, and contractors (as per the U.S. Center for SafeSport, this does not mean all adults who play in a league with a minor athlete need to take the training));
- All staff and boards of national, state, regional, and local USCA member organizations;
- All USA Curling employees, including High Performance staff, and USCA board members;
- All non-athletes who are authorized by USA Curling to reside, train, or work at an Olympic Training Center; and
- All athletes receiving funding from USA Curling, representing the United States in curling at world championship events, and/or designated for the required USADA testing pool.

All adults (18 and over) who are listed above as required to complete this training must do so:

- **Before regular contact** with an amateur athlete/participant who is a minor begins, or,
- **Within the first 45 days** upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy if there is no direct contact with minors involved in the role.

***\*\*SafeSport training can be found at [www.safesporttrained.org](http://www.safesporttrained.org) but also within the members MyUSACurling/Sport80 membership portal. Codes for accessing free training are being discouraged in favor of the member accessing training directly in their MyUSACurling/Sport80 profile. Questions regarding access can be answered by emailing [safesport@usacurling.org](mailto:safesport@usacurling.org) or [memberservices@usacurling.org](mailto:memberservices@usacurling.org) The initial CORE training should take approximately 90 minutes but does not need to be completed in one sitting. Successful completion of all quizzes is required.***

The required training consists of three sections:

- Sexual Misconduct Awareness Education
- Emotional and Physical Misconduct
- Mandatory Reporting

All three sections must be completed with passing scores on the final test for the training requirement to be met. These sessions do not, however, need to be completed in a single sitting. Training other than the core U.S. Center for SafeSport modules listed above does not satisfy this policy.

Following completion of the initial training, all individuals listed above must complete the SafeSport Refresher course on an annual basis. Currently, there are three SafeSport Refresher courses. Upon completion of the third refresher, the individual will revert to the initial training of CORE to begin the training cycle again. Failure to complete the program will result in the inability to participate in events conducted under the auspices of the USCA and all member organizations.

Individuals completing the training at the request of an organization other than the USCA (e.g., local club) should check with that organization regarding submission of proof of completion. It is the individual's responsibility to show proof of completion to the organization president or other individual who has been identified by that organization.

USA Curling staff will track and ensure compliance of individuals required to complete the training program who are associated with USA Curling programs. Periodic checks for compliance of member organizations will be conducted at least once annually. Such compliance checks may be conducted on a randomized basis. In addition, periodic reviews, at least once annually, of groups or people included in this requirement will be made by USA Curling staff with changes to the list published online.

### **Training for Minors**

The USCA will also offer annual training regarding prevention of child abuse for minors involved in USCA programs. Member organizations in the USCA are also required to communicate about training for minors to parents of minor participants. This training is subject to parental consent. Training will begin to be offered following the release of online minor training programs by the U.S. Center for SafeSport. The USCA will track a description of the training, date the training was offered and given, and a description of how the training was offered and given. [RESOURCES FOR PARENTS — USA CURLING](#)

### **Exceptions**

Exception to this Educational Awareness and Training policy may be made on a case-by-case basis for victims/survivors of abuse. Requests may be made directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport, [training@safesport.org](mailto:training@safesport.org), or to USA Curling, [safesport@usacurling.org](mailto:safesport@usacurling.org) Member organizations within the U.S. Curling Association, such as local clubs, do not have the authority to waive this requirement.

Exceptions may also be granted to organizations that have no minors in any programs and no potential for any minor participants (e.g., paper clubs) in any organizational event, including training sessions or private parties. Contact USA Curling with requests for exemptions.

## SECTION 4: SCREENING PROGRAM

The USCA has implemented a screening program in order to prevent known offenders from being placed in a position of authority in an event or program conducted under the auspices of the organization. Annual background checks will be required of anyone the USCA formally authorizes, approves or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following individuals:

- All coaches, including those at USCA events, championships, and playdowns leading to championship events;
- All officials serving in the capacity of chief umpire or deputy chief umpire at a USA Curling championship or other event, including all active Level III apprentices;
- The head ice maker at a USA Curling championship or event;
- The chair of the organizing committee for the USCA Junior National Championship;
- All course conductors for USA Curling Sport Education classes;
- All volunteers for junior camps receiving financial or administrative support from the USCA;
- All USA Curling employees, including independent contractors that directly support the High Performance Program or Junior High Performance Program, and USCA board members; and
- All non-athletes who are authorized by USA Curling to reside, train, or work at an Olympic Training Center.

All background checks must be completed prior to contact with athletes and/or 45 days following acceptance of a new role requiring completion of such training. Background checks are not conducted on individuals under the age of 18. While not currently required by Federal law or the U.S. Center for SafeSport policy, USA Curling also recommends that national, state, regional, and local organizations that are members of the USCA background screen all adults who have regular contact with and/or authority over minors within their organizations.

Background check registration information can be obtained from the Development Associate at USA Curling or by emailing a request to [safesport@usacurl.org](mailto:safesport@usacurl.org). (Do not use codes from previous years.) Upon completion, each applicant will receive either a “green light” or “red light” status. While a “red light” finding means the criminal background check revealed information that may suggest the applicant does not meet the criteria to work/volunteer with the USCA, it does not mean the applicant will be automatically disqualified. A designated USA Curling staff member will contact an applicant to discuss a “red light” status before a decision is made. In certain situations, it may be necessary to notify parents of participating athletes or others of the “red light” status. These decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

While passing a background check indicates that no criminal history was found that would disqualify the individual from working with children or others, it does not mean the individual is necessarily safe to work with children or others. As such, it is possible that other factors may disqualify an applicant from working or volunteering for an event or program conducted under the auspices of the USCA. Such factors may include having resigned, been terminated, or asked to resign from a position – paid or unpaid - due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors. In certain situations, it may be necessary to notify parents, clubs, and/or regional representatives of such disqualification.

Note: All coaches are required to notify the Compliance Director or Events Manager at USA Curling about arrests, indictments, and/or criminal convictions within thirty (30) days of occurrence. Failure to do so will result in an automatic suspension of the individual's status as a coach in good standing with the USCA for a period of at least one year.

USA Curling staff will track and ensure compliance of individuals required to pass a background screen for USA Curling programs and events. Periodic reviews, at least once annually, of groups or people included in this requirement will be made by USA Curling staff with changes to the list published online.

## SECTION 5: REPORTING POLICY

Actual or perceived misconduct or wrongdoing as delineated in the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* or within the *USA Curling MAAPP* at an event conducted under the auspices of the USCA and/or the US Center for SafeSport must be reported by Covered Individuals (as defined by this Handbook) according to the following guidelines. All others are also highly encouraged to report incidents.

- (1) All allegations of physical or sexual abuse must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities. As required by federal law, participating adults who learn about information giving reason to suspect that a child has suffered an incident of child abuse, including sexual abuse, must make a report to law enforcement and the U.S. Center for SafeSport within 24 hours of potential abuse. Individuals who choose not to report face a potential fine and imprisonment of up to one year.
- (2) **Please note: Most states have mandatory reporting laws requiring persons holding certain positions, such as a coach, to report suspicions of child physical or sexual abuse;** and
- (3) All suspected violations must be immediately reported to the person in charge of the event (e.g., chief umpire, camp director) or the second in command if the person in charge is not available or the allegation has been made toward that individual; and
- (4) All suspected violations should be reported to USA Curling (See p. 23, "*How to Report to USA Curling*") within 48 hours or two business days of learning about the incident or the US Center for SafeSport through the process defined in this Handbook. **It is the policy of USA Curling to immediately report any claims of child physical or sexual abuse to the authorities if a report has not already been made.**
  - a. Conduct by a Covered Individual that could constitute sexual misconduct should be reported to the US Center for SafeSport as directed on p.23 "*How to Report to the US Center for SafeSport*". USA Curling will forward all complaints under the jurisdiction of the US Center for SafeSport to that organization. USA Curling also reserves the right to forward other complaints to the US Center for SafeSport. Please note: The USCA, its staff members, and/or volunteers **will not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of a child physical or sexual abuse claim as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities or to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.** As necessary, however, representatives of the USCA may ask clarifying questions of the minor or person making the report to adequately report the suspicion or allegation to law enforcement authorities and/or the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Out of concern for the protection of youth athletes, the USCA reserves the right to suspend an individual until the matter is investigated and resolved by proper authorities.

Since the USCA does not own, operate, or otherwise control local curling clubs and/or other curling organizations, the USCA has no formal authority over these groups. However, it is the responsibility of persons governed by this Handbook to report violations by an individual who has been certified by USA Curling as a coach, instructor, official, or ice maker if it takes place at a non-USCA event or in a member club (e.g., misconduct by a certified coach at a bonspiel or misconduct by a certified instructor during a junior league). USA Curling also encourages all member organizations to adopt similar SafeSport policies and procedures. Member organizations are also encouraged to reach out to USA Curling and/or the US Center for SafeSport for assistance in cases of abuse or harassment within their organizations.

### **How to Report to USA Curling**

Reports to USA Curling can be made by (1) clicking the “*Report an Incident*” link on the USA Curling website, [REPORT AN INCIDENT — USA CURLING](#) (2) emailing [SafeSport@usacurling.org](mailto:SafeSport@usacurling.org) ; or (3) calling TOLL FREE (888) CURLERS (287-5377) and speaking to a designated SafeSport coordinator. SafeSport coordinators include the Chief Financial & Administrative Officer and the Chief Executive Officer.

While USA Curling will accept an anonymous complaint, it is strongly encouraged that the following information be included in all reports:

- Name and contact information of complainant
- Type of misconduct alleged
- Name(s) of individual(s) who allegedly committed the misconduct
- Name(s) of victim(s) of the alleged misconduct
- Approximate date, time, and location the alleged misconduct was committed
- Names of other individuals who might have information regarding the alleged misconduct
- Reasons suggesting that the misconduct has occurred

NOTE: No direct fees or other costs are involved in making a complaint.

### **How to Report to the US Center for SafeSport**

Covered Individuals (as defined in Section 1) MUST report to the U.S. Center of SafeSport conduct of which they become aware that could constitute (a) sexual misconduct (b) misconduct that is reasonably related to the underlying allegation of sexual misconduct and/or (c) retaliation related to an allegation of sexual misconduct.

Reports can be made by (1) calling the US Center for SafeSport office at 720-524-5640 Monday–Friday, 8am–5pm MT; (2) reporting online at [Report a SafeSport Concern | U.S. Center for SafeSport \(uscenterforsafesport.org\)](#) (online reports are accepted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week); or (3) through mail at the U.S. Center for SafeSport, C/O Response and Resolution Office, 1385 South Colorado Boulevard, Suite A-706, Denver, CO 80222. More details about reporting and the Center in general can be found online at [www.uscenterforsafesport.org](http://www.uscenterforsafesport.org)

Any reports made to USA Curling that fall under the jurisdiction of the US Center for SafeSport will be forwarded to the Center. The Center has exclusive jurisdiction over cases as defined in Section 1 and possible jurisdiction over additional cases referred to the US Center for SafeSport by USA Curling. Allegations that fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the US Center for SafeSport and/or are accepted

by the US Center for SafeSport at the request of USA Curling are investigated and resolved according to the policies of the US Center for SafeSport. Please see the *SafeSport Practices and Procedures for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement* and Supplementary Rules for U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement SafeSport Arbitrations at [Our Policies and Procedures | U.S. Center for SafeSport \(uscenterforsafesport.org\)](https://www.uscenterforsafesport.org) for more information.

Reporting to the Center and/or USA Curling DOES NOT satisfy any legal reporting requirements under state or federal law. If the suspected conduct may also be criminal, you are strongly encouraged to report to law enforcement. For state-by-state reporting requirements, see [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov).

### **Confidentiality of Cases Under the Jurisdiction of USA Curling**

The USCA cannot guarantee complete confidentiality of complaints under the jurisdiction of the USCA. However, the USCA will strive to ensure that all complaints are handled in a manner that, to the greatest degree possible, protects the rights of all parties. In an attempt to maintain confidentiality of complaints, records shall be produced and/or persons contacted only as may be necessary to process the complaint.

### **Complainant Protection of Cases Under the Jurisdiction of USA Curling**

Regardless of outcome, USA Curling supports the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. USA Curling will not tolerate attempts by any individual to retaliate, punish, or in any way harm any individual(s) who reports a concern in good faith. Any such retaliation will be grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Bad-Faith Allegations in Cases Under the Jurisdiction of USA Curling**

Any individual who alleges misconduct under the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* or *USA Curling MAAPP* that, upon review, is determined to be malicious, frivolous, or made in bad faith will be in violation of the policy and subject to disciplinary action. Bad-faith reports may also be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.

### **How Reported Alleged Violations Under the Jurisdiction of USA Curling Are Handled**

Reports to USA Curling alleging misconduct or wrongdoing as delineated in Section 1 of the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* or *USA Curling MAAPP*, or reports of activities that potentially put athletes, volunteers, staff, or others involved in USCA organizational activities in danger of harm will be handled according to the following process. Exceptions include allegations that fall under the jurisdiction of the US Center for SafeSport and additional cases that are referred by USA Curling to and accepted by the US Center for SafeSport for investigation and response.

Please note that the USCA reserves the right to restrict participation in events conducted under the auspices of the USCA and/or member organizations pending the outcome of an investigation or hearing if deemed to be in the best interest of the alleged victim(s) or the organization(s) as a whole.

- (1) **Review:** USA Curling shall review complaints judged to potentially fall under the purview of the USA Curling SafeSport policy that contain enough information to proceed with an investigation. Complaints determined to fall under the jurisdiction of another USCA policy or code will be processed according to the relevant policy or code.



USA Curling will use reasonable efforts to gather initial information regarding the complaint within two weeks of receipt of the complaint, or as soon as possible depending on the severity and time frame of the initial allegations.

(2) Course of Action: Following completion of the initial investigation, USA Curling may:

- i. **Take No Further Action**: USA Curling may take no further action on the complaint because of a lack of evidence of any misconduct or wrongdoing. USCA shall notify the accused and the complainant of this determination. The complainant may appeal this determination to the SafeSport Hearing Panel within thirty (30) days following receipt of notice. The appeal must be made in writing to USA Curling's Chief Executive Officer.

Should it be determined that, following the initial investigation, the situation falls under another USA Curling policy or code, it will be processed under such.

- ii. **Interim Sanction**: In instances where the evidence clearly suggests misconduct or wrongdoing, USA Curling may offer the accused a sanction proportional and reasonable to the violation. Sanctions could include, but are not limited to, temporary or permanent suspension of involvement in USCA events or membership in the organization. USA Curling may impose a time limitation as it determines is applicable for acceptance of the sanction.

The parties may appeal this determination to the SafeSport Hearing Panel within thirty (30) days following receipt of notice. The appeal must be made in writing to USA Curling's Chief Executive Officer.

- iii. **Refer to Hearing Panel**: USA Curling may report the wrongdoing to a Hearing Panel for adjudication.

(3) Hearing Panel Composition: The USCA SafeSport Hearing Panel shall consist of three (3) disinterested individuals. The Chief Executive Officer of USA Curling shall appoint the Panel members. One (1) athlete will be selected to serve on this panel. Should the CEO have a direct interest in the matter, the panel will be appointed by another officer of the USCA who is a disinterested party.

(4) Hearing/Decision: The following procedures shall be followed.

- i. **Notice**: The accused shall be informed in writing of the alleged misconduct or wrongdoing.
- ii. **Evidence**: The accused shall be afforded an opportunity to present oral and written evidence. If the complainant/victim is a minor, a written report may substitute for the minor's direct testimony. The rules of evidence will not be strictly enforced; instead, rules of evidence generally accepted in administrative proceedings shall be applied.
- iii. **Conduct of Hearing**: The Hearing Panel may set such rules regarding the proceeding and the conduct of the hearing as it deems necessary. Hearings will not be open to the public. Hearings may be conducted telephonically or by other electronic means.

The Hearing Panel may proceed in the accused's absence if the accused cannot be located or if the accused declines to attend the hearing.

- iv. **Finding:** After considering the evidence presented, the Hearing Panel will make a determination as to whether or not the accused has violated Section 1 of the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* or *USA Curling MAAPP* or has put athletes, volunteers, staff, or others involved in USCA organizational activities in danger of harm.
  - v. **Sanction:** If the Hearing Panel determines that a violation has occurred or that there is danger of harm, the Hearing Panel may impose sanctions it deems appropriate that are proportional and reasonable to the violation. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, temporary or permanent suspension of involvement in USCA events or membership in the organization.
- (5) **Appeals.** The complainant or accused may appeal the decision of the Hearing Panel to the American Arbitration Association, provided that such appeal is filed within thirty (30) days of notice of the Hearing Panel's determination.
- (6) **Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.** A proceeding that involves denial of an individual's opportunity to participate in protected athletic competition shall comply with the requirements of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.
- (7) **Employees.** An employee of USA Curling accused of misconduct or wrongdoing as delineated in Section 1 of the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook* or *USA Curling MAAPP* may be dealt with pursuant to the USA Curling's internal employment procedures, and not pursuant to this policy, if that approach is deemed appropriate to the situation. Any situation that may fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport must be reported to the Center.

### **Public Notification**

The USCA's primary concern is the safety of our members. When warranted, the USCA reserves the right to inform relevant members of the public of the alleged incident (e.g., parents of children who attended an event at which an accused individual coached, members of the club at which the incident took place, president of regional association). As previously noted, public notification may also be warranted based on the arrest or subsequent conviction of an individual.