

#WeRideTogether

Instructions for the **Safeguarding Essentials Template (SET) Package**


The Safeguarding Essentials Template (SET) Package has been designed by #WeRideTogether, a nonprofit dedicated to creating safe and healthy sporting environments.


This guide supports organizations in creating Safeguarding Essentials from an athlete-informed, community-centric, evidence-based, and trauma-informed lens.






Table of Contents

- [How to Use This Package](#)
 - [Step 1](#)
 - [Step 2](#)
 - [Step 3](#)
 - [Step 4](#)
 - [Step 5](#)
 - [SET Risk Assessment Instructions](#)
 - [SET Risk Assessment Template](#)
 - [SET Code of Conduct Instructions](#)
 - [SET Code of Conduct Template](#)
 - [SET Reporting Form Instructions](#)
 - [SET Reporting Form Template](#)
 - [SET Safeguarding Policy Instructions](#)
 - [SET Safeguarding Policy Template](#)
 - [SET Resources](#)
- 



Purpose: These templates can be used by any sporting organization worldwide. This package is designed to meet organizations where they are in their safeguarding journey. This package supplies sporting organizations with the baseline assets to support safe and healthy sport.

How to use this package:

- **TAKE YOUR TIME TO READ THROUGH THE WHOLE PACKAGE FIRST AND FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE SAFEGUARDING ASSETS. STEPS CAN BE COMPLETED AT YOUR OWN PACE AND DO NOT HAVE TO BE COMPLETED AT ALL AT ONCE.**
 - Assign one to two people at your organization who are or will be responsible for safeguarding to complete the steps below.
 - We recommend that every club have at least one designated Athlete Safeguarding Officer. This can be a trusted employee (preferably in HR or compliance) or an independent hire if budget allows. For smaller or newer clubs, a single person may be designated as Safeguarding Officer with a deputy named in the event the Safeguarding Officer is on leave, is conflicted out of an investigation, or otherwise separates from the club. Larger clubs or clubs with complex or recurring issues that trigger the Policy can consider convening a Safeguarding Team comprised of several individuals. In either instance, a club owner (or equivalent) should be charged with identifying these person(s). The designation and contact information of the Safeguarding Officer (or Team) should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are up-to-date.
 - The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for implementing and overseeing a club's Safeguarding Policy and, to the best of their ability, making every effort to prevent, recognize, and respond to reports of misconduct. To be successful in their role, the Safeguarding Officer should receive comprehensive training on abuse prevention and investigation, including extensive training as mandated by your organization.
 - The Safeguarding Officer and/or Team should have the interest, willingness, and commitment to educate themselves and others on safeguarding in sport. They must have the capability and bandwidth to fulfill this role within your organization, as well as a core understanding of the values associated with athlete safety and abuse prevention. Ideally, they have experience or a background in child abuse prevention, prevention education, mental health, safeguarding, and legislation pertaining to these topics. For more information and a detailed example job description for the safeguarding role, visit: [GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING](#).
 - Roles and responsibilities for these individuals and positions will be further discussed and outlined in the Safeguarding Policy you will create
 - Then, the appointed Safeguarding Officer and/or Safeguarding Coordinator will work through these steps:
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Step 1: Review Safeguarding Basics and the Safeguarding Stages below. Evaluate what stage your organization is in its safeguarding initiatives.

Step 2: Fill out the templates to create your Safeguarding Essentials for your organization.

Step 3: Confirm that what you have filled in in the templates matches your organization's and jurisdiction's legal and local requirements.

Step 4: Share the documents you have created with your organization and stakeholders.

Step 5: Repeat this process and update your documents at least once a year and with any organizational changes.

Note: #WeRideTogether provides pro-bono consultation services for any organization with specific needs or concerns. Please visit our website or contact us at info@weridetgether.today for more information.

Legal Disclaimer: #WeRideTogether provides general information that is intended to guide parties as to safeguarding best practices. We endeavor to keep our information current and up-to-date, but there is no guarantee of accuracy or that the information is complete. #WeRideTogether strongly encourages you to independently research and verify the information and to generate your own content. The information does not constitute legal advice. In this regard, you should not rely on any statements or representations made on this website or any third-party Internet sites referenced herein for legal advice or for any other purposes, and should consult an independent attorney for legal advice. #WeRideTogether does not assume any responsibility for actions or non-actions taken by people who have visited this site, and no one shall be entitled to a claim of any nature based on the information provided on this site, whether expressly, impliedly, or otherwise.

SET PACKAGE STEP 1: REVIEW AND EVALUATE

Review Safeguarding Basics

What is safeguarding?

- Safeguarding or anti-abuse efforts or abuse prevention refers to actions we take to keep participants safe from harm.

Why do we safeguard?

- All participants of sport have a right to train, practice, and compete safely. When we protect our participants, we are helping to preserve their opportunities to glean the benefits of sports. Safeguarding also works to protect coaches and sporting staff as well as protects the integrity and future of organizations, communities, and sports at large. Unfortunately, we know that sports are vulnerable areas for abuse to take place, with over 50% of all athletes experiencing some form of abuse in sports.

Whose responsibility is safeguarding?

- We all have a role to play in keeping sports safe and healthy. Abuse can happen anywhere, to anyone, in any sport, and at every level of sport. Organizations play a key role in safeguarding with their ability to set the tone from the top down, instill policy, reporting, and procedures, and provide safeguarding education, awareness, and resources. When athletes, coaches, staff, and stakeholders are supported, sporting environments and success improve!

What does safeguarding look like?

- Safeguarding in an organization connects to both interpersonal interactions and policies and procedures. People and policy are interconnected, and there is a reciprocal process of effective safeguarding through experience, learning, and updating. Best practices for safeguarding come from reflection and collaboration, bridging education, interpersonal dynamics, and policies together. Organizations are poised to provide stakeholders with behavioral expectations and guidelines to keep participants safe.

ORGANIZATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STAGES

Stage 1: Engagement and Commitment

- Learn about safeguarding, abuse in sports, and safeguarding standards locally, nationally, and internationally. This information will help inform policy and procedures to protect stakeholders best. You can do this by researching organizations and agencies that focus on safeguarding and combating abuse, serving your community and athletes worldwide. Resources are included at the end of this package to aid in your research.
- Collaborate with organizational leadership to prioritize safeguarding and identify the organization's designated safeguarding lead (officer, coordinator, director, or captain) and safeguarding team. Organizational unity and teamwork demonstrate commitment to safeguarding and creating an internal system of checks and balances to design, implement, and handle safeguarding initiatives and proceedings.
- Set goals for your organization's safeguarding that align with its mission, values, and cultural context, in which the organization serves and operates.

Stage 2: Risk Assessment

- Detail the scope and purpose of your risk assessment by outlining the programming, participants, and areas that will be assessed with a focus on safeguarding participants' holistic health and safety.
- Conduct a risk assessment and identify correlated needs within your organization. Sound and thorough risk assessments incorporate input from stakeholders, including staff, athletes, parents, etc.
- Analyze the information gathered on risks identified. This information will be utilized in the following Stages. Determine the organizational resources and ability to address each risk, and contact external consultants and experts for assistance as needed.

Stage 3: Policy, Code of Conduct, and Reporting Form Creation

- Using information gathered from stakeholders and the risk assessment, draft the organization's code of conduct, reporting form, and safeguarding policy.
- Contents of these documents will be stakeholder-informed, reflective of community culture, and in alignment with applicable legal and regulatory jurisdiction requirements.
- Documents will receive feedback, approval, and frequent updates from organizational leadership.

Stage 4: Training and Roll Out

- Educate and inform stakeholders about the documents created. This looks like online and in-person distribution of safeguarding essentials.
- Organizational participants must sign off and be trained on the contents of the documents. Offer training on the created safeguarding assets and their contents in multiple interactive formats to various stakeholder groups.
- Maintain a detailed database that records participants' acknowledgment of documents and their training completion.

Stage 5: Integration and Reiteration

- Use multimedia, signage, and resources to remind and reiterate the organizational community of the commitment to and process of safeguarding at your organization.
- Maintain a detailed record and secure database that is mindful of both confidentiality and transparency, adhering to applicable laws and regulations.
- Schedule and complete routine, at a minimum, annual reviews and updates to your organization's safeguarding initiatives, including but not limited to the safeguarding essentials. This includes collaborating with safeguarding experts and partners to continue working together to learn and implement best practices for athlete and sport safety.

Action Step:

Identify which stage your organization is in. This will help to indicate where your safeguarding efforts should focus. Resources and tips are provided throughout this Safeguarding Template Package for organizations at each stage.

If your organization is in Stage 1, complete the engagement process outlined above in Stage 1 before proceeding to Package Step 2.

If your organization is in Stages 2-5 as outlined above, proceed to Package Step 2.

SET PACKAGE STEP 2: TEMPLATES

If your organization is in Stage 2 or 3, work through and complete the templates below to the best of your ability.

Best practice is to gather information from your organization's stakeholders. Staff, athletes, parents, etc., should be involved in determining the risks present at an organization and agreed-upon behavioral expectations. This could look like asking for stakeholder input and feedback via email, online form, or focus groups. Stakeholders must feel safe, heard, and protected in this process without fear of retaliation. Provide them with an option to submit information with anonymity.

If your organization is in Stages 4-5, re-collect information from stakeholders as advised above. Once completed and feedback is integrated, cross reference that your organization's policy paperwork – Risk Assessment, Code of Conduct, Reporting Form, and Safeguarding Policy – contain the essentials provided in the templates below as they contain the basic requirements necessary.

Action Step:

Seek input and collect information from organizational stakeholders. Example questions to ask stakeholders:

- Do you and your team discuss safeguarding and athlete abuse prevention? Is there stigma or fear around the topic? How would you define safeguarding?
- What's going well with athlete safeguarding and abuse prevention for you or your team? What is not going well?
- What are the most prevalent safeguarding issues for you or others you are in connection with? (such as physical safety, verbal abuse, mental health, sexual abuse, financial exploitation, emotional abuse, discrimination, bullying, hazing, etc.)

- Do you have any examples of concerns that you would like to share?
- Are safety or health concerns different for different members of your community (such as different concerns based on the age or level of athletes and differences by gender; also include concerns from parents, coaches, and staff)?
- What educational information or resources do you or your community need?
- What do you wish this organization would do differently to better protect athletes?
- In a dream world, what prevention efforts or safeguarding policies would be in place? Is there anything else these questions are missing that could be helpful to improve safeguarding at our organization?

Action Step:

To complete the forms for your four essential safeguarding documents, refer to the four Instruction Documents below (starting on page 9).

Within each, you will find a link to a Google Form specific to the safeguarding document that you will create. The Google Form will automatically populate and produce a PDF for your organization, which #WRT will send to you within 5 business days.

FORMS:

- [Risk Assessment](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Reporting Form](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)

SET PACKAGE STEP 3: CONFIRM

Action Step:


For organizations at all stages of organizational safeguarding, share your new documents with your organizational leadership and legal team. Confirm that your policies are in alignment, and follow applicable jurisdiction for your organization and its programming. Integrate changes and feedback as applicable until your final documents are approved.

If your organization needs help finding legal services and support, visit <https://www.pilnet.org/>.

SET PACKAGE STEP 4: SHARE AND TRAIN

Action Step:

Once all of your policy documents have been approved, it is time for organizations at all organizational safeguarding stages to share them with your stakeholders and the public. This looks like posting your policy documents in an accessible place on your webpage, having them readily available in paper form at organizational facilities, and incorporating the signing of the policies at onboarding and yearly reviews for all participants and staff.



This means when any new participants and staff join your organization, they receive, read, and sign these documents, and that all participants and staff review and re-sign these assets annually.

Next, after your documents have been finalized and shared, set up and roll out training on your organization's Safeguarding Essentials. This looks like the Safeguarding Officer and/or Coordinator providing at a minimum, an annual all-hands training for community members. During this training, the Safeguarding Officer and/or Coordinator will educate the community members on the safeguarding essentials and provide time for questions and answers.

Additionally, the Safeguarding Officer and/or Coordinator will be responsible for keeping track of and ensuring that community members and stakeholders are able to access and stay up to date on their specific extra training requirements as detailed in the safeguarding policy you created. Remember that research shows that prevention education and safeguarding efforts must be provided regularly and often to be effective.



SET PACKAGE STEP 5: REPEAT

The process of reviewing and updating your safeguarding documents should be done by organizations annually, at the minimum. See the action steps below on how to repeat the steps and integrate new information into your safeguarding essentials to keep your organization up to date.

Action Step:

Best practice is to continually conduct a risk assessment for your organization and programs, especially when staff, programming, and locations change.

Additionally, the safeguarding team should review incidents, be mindful of confidentiality, learn from them, and improve proactive prevention efforts based on concerns in the organizational community.

Collect feedback and input regularly from stakeholders using surveys and forms to ensure anonymity is protected. This helps to ensure that safeguards are in place and functioning correctly. Use the information gathered above and repeat the Steps in this package at least annually, updating your Risk Assessment, Code of Conduct, Reporting Form, and Safeguarding Policy accordingly.



CONGRATULATIONS!

You have completed the Safeguarding Essentials Template Package. Your organization is now set up with the safeguarding basics to support the safety and health of your participants.

Remember, safeguarding is an evolving process. Having incidents, of course, is something that we want to reduce and eliminate. However, incidents happen, and what we can do is learn from them and keep improving.

Thank you for your commitment to safeguarding and for your efforts in this process! Be sure to share feedback with #WeRideTogether and reach out for assistance at info@weridetgether.today.

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SET

Risk Assessment



SET RISK ASSESSMENT

About Risk Assessments:

The Risk Assessment is a standalone document and a blank version will be included in the Appendix of the Safeguarding Policy. Risk Assessments can highlight safeguarding needs and concerns within your organization and its programming. All stakeholders must be reached and represented to assess risks and needs within your organization accurately.

What you will need to fill out this template:

- The commitment of your organization to safeguard participants.
- An understanding of your organization's scope: sports, activities, locations, and participant demographics.
- An understanding of your organization's stakeholder parties: leadership, staff, external parties (i.e., volunteers, ambassadors, interns), athletes, parents, coaches, etc.
- The information you gathered from organization stakeholders and participants' surveys, focus groups, and feedback per the SET Package Step 2.
- The regulations, standards, and best practice information that apply to your organization and the applicable jurisdiction about safeguarding, child abuse, and athlete safety.
- Review the example risk assessments provided below for inspiration and guidance.

Instructions:

- Review the template below and then [follow this link to the correlated Google Form](#) to complete this template electronically to produce a PDF.
- Take the time to be thorough and work through this form from your perspective, as well as from the viewpoint of each organizational stakeholder group (coaches, parents, athletes, etc.).
- Walk through and/or visualize each aspect and element of your organizational activities, processes, and programming to identify any potential risks pertaining to safety and abuse prevention for all participants.
- **Identify each type of risk and label accordingly:**
 - Environmental risk
 - For example, this could include risks associated with weather, such as lightning and heat, or sports-related risks, including concussions.
 - Safeguarding risk:
 - For example, this could include risks associated with abuse and misconduct. This could include online and in-person communication, travel arrangements, and both physical and non-physical interactions.
 - Organizational risk:
 - For example, this could include financial and legal risks, institutional betrayal, or compliance issues.

- Then, describe the necessary mitigation needed for each risk identified
 - Training Needs:
 - For example, this could include that coaches need proper education and training on athlete mental health.
 - Resource Needs:
 - For example, this could include that athletes need access to a neutral third-party helpline for support pertaining to safeguarding questions or concerns. Or putting lights in dark parking lots, and cameras in certain areas.
 - Policy Needs:
 - For example, this could include that coaches and staff need a more user-friendly and realistic reporting system that can be accessed electronically.
- Upon completion, highlight action steps necessary to reduce and eliminate the risks identified. Incorporate these needs into the following document creation templates.

Examples

Here are some examples of risk assessments for sporting organizations to aid in your process of assessing risk at your organization:

- [MULTI-SPORTS RISK ASSESSMENT](#)
- [Organisation Risk Assessment Form | Sport NZ](#)
- [THE SPORT SITUATIONAL PREVENTION APPROACH](#)
- [#WeRideTogether Risk Assessment Mapping Exercise](#)
- [RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN](#)
- [Risk Assessment Templates](#)

SET Risk Assessment Template

Section 1: Basic Information

1. Organization: <<Organization Name>>
2. Sport/Activity Covered: <<List of organizations activities, services, and/or programs>>
3. Location/Region: <<Place where the organization is based>>
4. Travel Inclusions: <<Transport and Lodging information>>
5. Age Group(s): <<Age demographic of participants served>>
6. Assessment Date: <<Date of completing this risk assessment>>

Section 2: Risk Identification

- Risks Identified:

Type of Risk	Description of the Risk	Mitigation Type Needed	Description of Mitigation Needed
<<Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<Description of Risk>>	<<Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<2 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<2 Description of Risk>>	<<2 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<2 Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<3 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<3 Description of Risk>>	<<3 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<3 Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<4 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<4 Description of Risk>>	<<4 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<4 Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<5 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<5 Description of Risk>>	<<5 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<5 Description of Mitigation Needed>>



Section 3: Action Plan

Based on the risks identified above, list your top 3 priorities for addressing risks. Think about the severity and likelihood of the risks identified to guide your priority action steps.

- Priority 1: <<Short Answer Field - Priority 1>>
- Priority 2: <<Short Answer Field - Priority 2>>
- Priority 3: <<Short Answer Field - Priority 3>>

Who is responsible for implementing these actions?

- <<Short Answer Field>>

What is the timeline for completion?

- <<Timeline for Completion>>

Additional Observation or Goals:

- <<Additional Goals and/or Observations>>

Section 4: Next Risk Assessment Due to Ensure Consistent Monitoring and Improvement

<<Date 6 months from today>>

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SET Code of Conduct



SET Code of Conduct

About the Code of Conduct:

The Code of Conduct is one of many sections in the Safeguarding Policy and is a standalone document. The Code of Conduct critically outlines agreed-upon behavioral expectations for participants and stakeholders within an organization. Thus, this document can serve as a backbone to uphold best practices for prevention and outline prohibited conduct. This document should be culturally sound and specific, and tailored to the organization's mission, needs, and programming.

What you will need to fill out this template:

- The information you gathered from organization stakeholders and participants through surveys, focus groups, and feedback.
- Regulations, standards, and best practice information that apply to your organization and the applicable jurisdiction.
- Information from the Risk Assessment you conducted.
- Review Example Code of Conducts from which your organization wishes to draw.

Instructions:

- Review the template below and then [follow this link to the correlated Google Form](#) to complete this template electronically to produce a PDF.
- Work through this form, declaring “I” statements that each person who signs off on this document will agree upon regarding their conduct within your organization.

Examples:

- [#WRT Coach Athlete Pledge](#)
- [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#)
- [ATHLETE BILL OF RIGHTS](#)
- [World Athletes Template Code of Conduct](#)
- [USA BASKETBALL CODE OF CONDUCT](#)
- [English - Intentional Sports](#)
- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Additional Examples of Codes of Conduct](#)

SET Code of Conduct Template

<<Organization Name>> Code of Conduct

As a stakeholder or participant at <<Organization Name>>, I firmly believe in doing my part to ensure that <<Organization Name>> is safe. I pledge to ensure current and future generations of participants have safe and healthy experiences by committing to the following:

1. <<best practice one>>
2. <<best practice two>>
3. <<best practice three>>
4. <<best practice four>>
5. <<best practice five>>
6. <<best practice six>>
7. <<best practice seven>>
8. <<best practice eight>>
9. <<best practice nine>>
10. <<best practice ten>>

<<Additional best practices you want to include in your Code of Conduct>>

I, _____, take this pledge to protect all participants at <<Organization Name>> from abuse and misconduct and create a safe and healthy experience at <<Organization Name>>.

Printed Name of Minor (under 18)

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

OR

Printed Name of Individual (18 or over)

Signature of Individual

Date

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SET Reporting Form



SET Reporting Form

About Reporting Forms:

The Reporting Form is one of your organization's most critical safeguarding documents. It is one of many sections in the Safeguarding Policy and is a standalone document. This form will be utilized by any stakeholder, participant, or person who is mandated to or makes a report on misconduct or abuse that occurred within your organization or its programming. This document must be easily accessible, clear, and concise. This enables reporters to detail what they experienced, witnessed, heard, observed, or suspected with all the necessary information your organization may need. Remember, depending on your organization's applicable local jurisdiction, additional information or different information may need to be reported first to local law enforcement, human services, or other designated reporting entities, in conjunction with internal reporting to your organization.

What you will need to fill out this template:

- Applicable legislation and regulations regarding reporting in your organization's jurisdiction.
- A secure and reliable email address for safeguarding reports. This database will contain all reports and should only be accessed by your safeguarding team. It is of utmost importance to maintain confidentiality.

Instructions:

- Review the template below and [follow this link to the correlated Google Form](#) to complete this template electronically to produce a PDF.
- This template provides the minimum necessary information to be gathered. Your organization can include additional information as required by local jurisdiction regulations and cultural considerations.

SET Reporting Form Template

<<Organization Name>> Reporting Form

This form may be completed by anyone who witnesses, suspects, observes, or hears about misconduct or abuse at <<Organization Name>>. This form must be completed within <<Number of hours (legal requirement detailing how soon after abuse that a report must be made)>> hours of the incident, or you are aware of the incident.

Section 1: Basic Information

1. Organization Name: <<Organization Name>>

2. Sport/Activity/Team: _____

3. Full Name of Person Completing the Report: _____

4. Role of Reporter (Athlete, Coach, Volunteer, Parent/Guardian, Official, Staff Member, Other):

5. Contact Information of Reporter:

- Email Address: _____

- Phone Number: _____

Section 2: Incident Details

1. Type of Incident Being Reported (Physical Abuse or Misconduct, Emotional Abuse or Misconduct, Sexual Abuse or Misconduct, Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Other, Unknown, Multiple Forms of Abuse or Misconduct):

2. Date and Time of Incident: _____

3. Location of Incident: _____

4. Individuals Involved:

- Name(s) of Person(s) Involved: _____

- Role(s): _____

5. Witnesses (if any):

- Name(s): _____

8. Additional Information or Concerns (if any). <<Additional information as required by local jurisdiction regulations and cultural considerations>>

[illegible]

Section 3: Acknowledgment and Submission

<<Organization Name>> will not encourage, allow, or tolerate attempts from any individual to retaliate, punish, or in any way harm any individual(s) who reports a concern to law enforcement, <<Organization Name>>, or otherwise in good faith. Such actions against a complainant will be considered a violation of this Policy and grounds for disciplinary action by <<Organization Name>>.

Remember, it is not your responsibility to investigate or get involved beyond immediate safety threats. The safeguarding officer will review the report and follow procedures regarding next steps.

- Statement of Truth:

I confirm that the information provided in this report is accurate and truthful to the best of my knowledge. Do you agree to this statement?

(Yes or No) _____

I confirm that I have followed the reporting procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy and flowchart, and local reporting requirements. Do you agree to this statement?

(Yes or No) _____

- Signature (Full Name): _____
- Date and Time of Submission: _____

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SET Safeguarding Policy



SET Safeguarding Policy

About Safeguarding Policies:

An organization's Safeguarding Policy serves as the central point or home base for its safeguarding commitment, best practices, expectations, and reporting procedures. The Safeguarding Policy will contain the organization's safeguarding materials and information, making it easily accessible to stakeholders. Safeguarding policies should be part of the sign-on or hiring process for new participants or staff members at your organization.

The Safeguarding Policy should be enforceable, actionable, realistic, and culturally mindful, thus unique to your organization's risks, needs, and resources. Stakeholders and participants should be trained on the contents of your Safeguarding Policy. The policy itself should be updated regularly, at a minimum annually, and following the applicable jurisdiction. The most effective policies are inclusive, easy to read, provide education, and demonstrate the organization's commitment to safeguarding.

What you will need to fill out this template:


- Information about your organization's safeguarding lead and/or team.
- A dedicated secure email address for safeguarding reports.
- Local jurisdiction requirements for reporting abuse and misconduct.
- Information gathered regarding your organization's goals, needs, and risks, responding to insights derived from completing the Risk Assessment and Code of Conduct. This includes safeguarding risks, environmental risks, and organizational risks.
- To have completed the previous templates – Risk Assessment, Code of Conduct, and Reporting Form.
- Review the example safeguarding policies provided below for inspiration and guidance.
- Determine which safeguarding or anti-abuse training best suits your organization. Training requirements should be the most robust for the Safeguarding Officer/Team and comprehensive to serve all stakeholders, including Coaches, Staff, Athletes, Parents, and Other parties in your organization, such as Board Members, Volunteers, Interns, Ambassadors, and Contractors. Prevention education must be provided and dosed regularly to increase awareness of safeguarding concerns and best practices. Below are some recommendations:
 - For organizations under the USOPC umbrella: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/training-and-education/safesport-courses-for-all/>
 - For organizations outside of the USOPC umbrella: <https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/index.php?categoryid=863>
 - For international organizations: <https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/index.php?categoryid=863>



Instructions:

- Review the template below and [follow this link to the correlated Google Form](#) to complete this template electronically to produce a PDF.
- Input information about your organization's safeguarding structure and contacts, mission and values, and other agreed-upon misconduct that will not be tolerated at your organization.

Examples:

- [U.S. Figure Skating SkateSafe Handbook](#)
 - [SAFE SPORT PROGRAM HANDBOOK](#)
 - [USEF SAFE SPORT POLICY](#)
 - [MAPP 2025 US Center for SafeSport](#)
 - [USA Taekwondo](#)
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SET Safeguarding Policy Template

<<Organization Name>> Safeguarding Policy

Introduction This policy is established for the organization named <<Organization Name>> to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants and stakeholders. This policy will be available and accessible on the organization's website and in-person events.

Everyone must take a proactive role in fostering a healthy and safe environment free of abuse and misconduct at <<Organization Name>>.

This Safeguarding Policy serves two purposes:

1. The Safeguarding Policy articulates the expectations of <<Organization Name>> in regard to preventing, recognizing, and responding to abuse and misconduct; and
2. The Safeguarding Policy provides express rules, requirements, and guidance around preventing, recognizing, and responding to abuse and misconduct, as well as processes in the wake of suspected or actual abuse and misconduct.

Please read the Policy in full, and use the **Acknowledgment Form** at the end of this document to certify that you have read and understood the Policy. If you have any questions, please contact <<Safeguarding Officer Email>> without delay.

Scope This policy covers all <<List of who the policy applies to (i.e. all participants, coaches, athletes, staff, volunteers, etc)>> within <<Organization Name>>.

Purpose The purpose of this policy is to:

- Describe expectations for protecting individuals from harm.
- Detail roles and responsibilities related to safeguarding.
- Provide reporting and response protocols.

Commitment <<Organization Name>> is dedicated to protect the mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing of its athletes, above all. All persons to whom the policy applies and covers will sign the included acknowledgment of receipt and agreement to the contents of this policy.

Definitions

- **Safeguarding** or anti-abuse efforts or abuse prevention refers to actions we take to keep participants safe from harm.
- **Minor Participant** An amateur athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, a <<Organization Name>> activity, program, practice, meet, tournament, camp, clinic, competition, exhibition, or similar event. For purposes of this Policy, Minor Participants shall also include adults and minors who are vulnerable by virtue of any physical, emotional, or circumstantial disadvantage, disability, or illness that may render them at increased risk for abuse and misconduct.
- **Adult Participant** An amateur athlete who is over 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, a <<Organization Name>> activity, program, practice, meet, tournament, camp, clinic, competition, exhibition, or similar event. - OR - Any adult (18 years of age or older) who is an owner, employee, executive, or director of <<Organization Name>> including coaches, assistant coaches, teachers, trainers, medical personnel, officials, referees, Board members, staff, and volunteers, whether paid or unpaid; or an adult who is otherwise within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of applicable Governing Body (<<Name of Organization's Governing Body, if applicable>>).

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Safeguarding Officer(s)/Safeguarding Team:** Responsible for overseeing all safeguarding matters and handling reports. This includes conducting screening and background verifications for all participants (detailed in Appendix 4), providing access to prevention education for all community members, and facilitating and assisting with reporting investigations and follow-up. Additionally, they will communicate safeguarding concerns and reports to the <<Organization Name>> board and other applicable reporting entities required by the local jurisdiction.
- **Coaches and Athletes:** Responsible for upholding the Code of Conduct and abiding by the policies and procedures.
- **Staff and Others:** Responsible for understanding and complying with safeguarding policies and procedures.

For avoidance of doubt, every Participant or other adult who is subject to this Policy is a Mandated Reporter and is required to report suspected or actual abuse or misconduct as a fundamental tenet of this Policy. Failure to report suspected abuse or misconduct is a violation of this Policy. If you see something, say something.

Identifying Abuse and Misconduct

Abuse and misconduct can happen anywhere to anyone. The types of abuse and misconduct listed here provide knowledge and insight into unsafe and unhealthy behaviors and dynamics that could occur in a sporting organization. Definitions of 'harm' to children, young persons, and vulnerable adults may vary depending on the context and culture. Abuse may be perpetrated interpersonally by a known person of any age or relation, a stranger, an institution, organization, system, or online. Often, types of harm, abuse, and misconduct overlap.

The following definitions can be used as a guide, but not an exhaustive list. These definitions can provide information for risk assessments and developing preventative measures and behavioral expectations. All participants, children, young persons, and vulnerable adults deserve to be treated with care and respect and have the opportunity to enjoy programming and interactions in safe environments free from any and all types of harm.

- **Physical abuse:** refers to intentional or unintentional physical actions that cause or threaten to cause harm to the person. This does not include accidental injury or well-regulated sport-sanctioned conduct acceptable in certain sports. In the sport, physical abuse can look like this:
 - Contact: punching, hitting, poisoning, drowning, burning, shaking, beating, biting, striking, strangling, slapping, stabbing, pulling hair/ears, grabbing, pushing, cutting, paddling, scarring, whipping, branding, hitting with objects/sports equipment, rough corrections of position
 - Non-contact: forcing a person to play while injured or return to sport without medical clearance, fabricating symptoms of injury on behalf of the athlete, deliberating inducing sickness, confining and isolating a person in a small space, forcing a person to assume a painful position for no legitimate reason, providing any illicit substance including drugs, alcohol, or non-prescribed medication to an athlete
- **Sexual abuse:** conduct or threatened conduct that is forced and/or coerced and is sexual in nature that the person does not fully understand, cannot consent to, or has no choice to consent to. In sports, this may look like this:
 - Indecent exposure: exposing or requesting child sexual abuse material or pornographic material, forcing an athlete to look at or produce sexual images or activities, and encouraging an athlete to behave in a sexually inappropriate way

- Non-consensual contact: masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching with an object or body part (clothed or unclothed) of an athlete's genitals, breasts, or buttocks
- Non-consensual intercourse: oral sex, any penetration with an object or body part
- Grooming: a tactic where someone methodically builds a trusting relationship with a child, young person, or vulnerable adult, their family, and community to manipulate, coerce, or force the child, young person, or vulnerable adult to engage in sexual activities or other activities of an inappropriate nature.
- Inappropriate relationships: a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by an athlete as consensual when the relationship involves an imbalance of power; consent is impossible as the athlete's options are limited due to force, coercion, or manipulation
- **Exploitation:** Exploitation is an abuse of power when a person is harmed or treated unfairly for gain or benefit. In sports, this can look like this:
 - Financial abuse: financial control over a person (withholding, limiting access, stealing, or lying about funds), forced labor without fair compensation
 - Sexual exploitation: forcing sexual activity for profit, recording, distributing, allowing others to watch sexual activity, exposure to disease
 - Trafficking: transporting persons for economic gain and/or forced labor or sexual acts, withholding documentation and paperwork
- **Neglect:** actions or the absence of actions that fail to provide care, supervision, affection, protection, and support for a person's basic needs, health, safety, and well-being and that are likely to result in serious impairment of the person's holistic development. In sports, neglect can present in a variety of ways:
 - Physical neglect: failure to provide for physical needs, safety requirements, inadequate supervision during training, competition, and travel, allowing bullying or hazing
 - Emotional neglect: withholding attention, failing to provide psychological support and well-being, or ignoring the athlete's emotional needs
 - Medical neglect: failing to provide a person with needed medical attention, disregarding medical directions pertaining to time to heal from illness or injury, forcing a person to play/perform while injured, improperly treating injuries
 - General neglect: maternal during pregnancy, failure to provide a person with appropriate food and water, shelter, using inadequate and unsafe equipment, and/or the ill-treatment of a person with disabilities, failure to report abuse
 - Improper training and overtraining: forcing a person to train in a way that is dangerous to their body, not allowing enough recovery time between strenuous sessions
- **Psychological or Emotional abuse:** acts and behaviors, most often repeated and persistent, that interfere with and negatively impact an athlete's positive emotional and social development and self-worth. In sports, this can happen online and in person and can look like this:
 - Verbal acts: name-calling, body-shaming, ridiculing, humiliating, bullying, threatening, discriminating, mocking, spreading rumors, quick oscillation between praise and criticism, promoting disordered eating

- Physical acts: ignoring, isolating, segregating, denying coaching and guidance, punching/throwing things around the athlete
- Stalking: monitoring, observing, excessively messaging
- Tactics: manipulation, gaslighting, controlling an athlete's social interactions, domination, guilt-tripping, mind games, silent treatment, possessiveness, frightening
- **Hazing:** actions or practices that intend to or likely subject an athlete to harmful circumstances and/or activities as a condition to join or be socially accepted by a group, team, or organization. Hazing behaviors can be described as follows:
 - Intimidation: deception, assignment of demerits, silence period with threats for violation, social isolation, demeaning names, expecting certain items to always be in one's possession
 - Harassment: verbal abuse, threats or implied threats, forced nudity, forcing to wear embarrassing attire, degrading or humiliating skits, sleep deprivation, sexual simulations
 - Violence: forced substance consumption, physical assault, branding, forced ingestion of vile substances, water intoxication, kidnapping, sexual assault
- **Discrimination:** the prejudicial treatment of persons or groups based on attributes or protected categories. Simply put, it is treating some persons differently than others because of certain characteristics they have. Protected characteristics may include age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, ability, marital status, pregnancy status, sexual orientation, genetic and health conditions. When discrimination occurs, athletes are negatively impacted by unfair decisions, practices, and policies.
- **Harassment:** unwelcome conduct that causes fear, humiliation, annoyance, offends, degrades, or reflects a discriminatory bias that creates a hostile environment. In sports, this can look like this:
 - Verbal: threatening, ridiculing, using slurs and offensive language or jokes, insults
 - Physical: touching, intimidation, or assault
 - Sexual: unwanted advances, making sexual requests, communication, and conduct of a sexual nature
 - Visual: displaying or forcing someone to look at offensive content
 - Superiority: attempting to assert dominance against a person or group based on discriminatory characteristics
 - Conditional: submission to, objection to, or rejection of such harassment as a term for employment, standing participation in, or sports-related decisions
- **Bullying:** Conduct that intends to or does hurt, control, or diminish another athlete, often someone who may be viewed as vulnerable. Bullying characteristically is repetitive and intentional and leverages an imbalance of power between parties. Bullying behavior tactics can include and involve previously described elements of verbal, emotional, physical, financial, and sexual abuse, discrimination, and/or harassment.
- **Stigma as abuse:** Less known and discussed is how stigma, the societal or interpersonal disapproval or mark of disgrace towards a particular quality or circumstance, can be a form of abuse. Stigma can be associated with mental health, survivorship, domestic violence, disabilities, abuse, incarceration, and substance use. In sports, stigma can result in the shame, discrediting, negative perception, and mistreatment of an athlete. This means that the athlete may be treated differently due to stigma from others and may manifest as a lack of opportunity, a barrier to seeking help and resources, and dismissal of their experiences.

Placeholder for your organization's Code of Conduct

Guidance for Interactions with Minor Participants

Per the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (“MAAPP”), which informs this section of the Policy, one-on-one interactions between a Minor Participant and an Adult Participant who is not the minor’s legal guardian must be observable and interruptible (unless an exception applies). For example:

One-on-One Meetings:

- another adult present, except under emergency circumstances
- interactions can be easily observed, and interruptible
- if in an office, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open

One-on-One Training Sessions:

- observable and interruptible by another adult
- if not observable and interruptible, Adult Participant to obtain the written permission of the Minor Participant’s parent or legal guardian in advance of the one-on-one training session(s)

Gifting:

- gift-giving or providing special favors or privileges to individual Minor Athletes are prohibited

Massages/Athletic Training:

- observable and interruptible by another adult
- another adult must be physically present
- Minor Participant must be fully or largely clothed
- parent/guardian must be allowed to be present
- administered by an individual who is licensed, and certified to perform manual therapy, therapeutic modalities, or recovery modalities
- provider must narrate the steps in the modality before taking them, seeking assent of the Minor Participant throughout the process

Electronic Communications & Social Media:

- observable and interruptible concept applies, group messaging platforms are ideal
- Adult Participants must include the Minor Participant’s parent or guardian in any electronic communication
- Adult Participants may not “friend,” accept a “friend request” from, or otherwise connect with, Minor Participants on their personal social media accounts

Locker Room/Changing Areas:

- in the locker room, Minor Participants will be given a private or semi-private area option for the purpose of undressing
- use of recording devices, video cameras, and cameras are strictly prohibited
- a <<Organization Name>> staff member will be designated by the Safeguarding Officer/Safeguarding Team with primary responsibility to oversee the safety and well-being of Minor Participants in the locker room/changing areas

Travel:

- an Adult Participant and Minor Participant should not travel together alone in a vehicle (except with the written permission of the Minor Participant’s parent or legal guardian in advance)
- during overnight team travel, an Adult Participant should not share a room in a hotel, condominium, or other facility with a minor athlete (except with the written permission of the Minor Participant’s parent or legal guardian in advance)
- during overnight team travel, athletes should be paired with other athletes of the same gender and of similar age
- during overnight team travel, a curfew should be set and communicated to athletes and parents
- during overnight team travel, two Adult Participants should perform routine and unplanned room checks for any overnight lodging to ensure the safety of the Minor Participants

These restrictions are applicable to all <<Organization Name>> related or branded activities, including during practice, competition, travel, lodging, and during any health or medical treatment occurring on site. **31**

Environmental Safety Protocols

Given the nature of <<Organization Name>> programming, environmental safety protocols are necessary to protect all participants.

- Medication Administration

Do not administer medication onsite at programs and events, including aspirin, products containing acetaminophen, or over-the-counter cold remedies. Some over-the-counter products contain medications that may be banned by the <<Insert Applicable National Governing Body or Anti-Doping Agency>>. It is the individual's responsibility to take such medications properly under the direction of his or her physician, guardian, or both. In addition, never supply any food supplements, protein drinks, or energy supplements other than standard sports drinks (e.g., Gatorade).

- Other Emergencies

Life-threatening emergencies can occur at any time and can include a seizure, heart attack, sudden fall with head trauma, sudden collapse, natural disasters, extreme weather events, and evacuation situations. In the event of such an emergency, Adult Participants are expected to activate the emergency response system by calling <<Local Emergency Phone Number>>. It is important to maintain a calm environment and remove all unnecessary people from the scene.

- Concussion Management

If, during a <<Organization Name>> activity, program, practice, meet, tournament, camp, clinic, competition, exhibition, or similar event, an athlete sustains a concussion or exhibits the signs, symptoms, or behaviors of concussion, the athlete must be removed from all sports activity. The athlete may not return to any practice or game activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussion (i.e., physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, athletic trainer, or Sport-Certified Physical Therapist). The athlete must provide written clearance from that provider prior to the athlete being allowed to return to participation. <<Organization Name>> will keep evidence of all written clearance forms on file. For additional information and training on concussion management, visit: [NCAA Concussion Education](#), [HEADS UP](#) and [Concussion Legacy Foundation](#)

- Heat Illness

Heat illness is an acute medical condition that arises from a combination of dehydration and overheating in the body. Heat illness occurs most commonly in hot, humid conditions, especially if there is little wind. The symptoms and signs of heat illness include unusual or excessive tiredness, headache, nausea (with or without vomiting), cramps, dizziness, passing out, and high body temperature. Heat stroke is a medical emergency, and typically individuals appear acutely ill, have a high body temperature, and are unable to drink any fluids.

In any <<Organization Name>> program or event taking place in hot and humid conditions, the following precautions should be taken:

- Post signs advising athletes and support staff to drink plenty of fluids.
- Try to provide and identify areas with shade for cooling, plenty of fluids, and cold, wet towels or icepacks.
- If an athlete cannot drink or has no desire to drink, has lost consciousness, or has a change in level of consciousness, or if there is any doubt about the athlete's condition, arrange for emergency transport to the nearest hospital via <<Local Emergency Phone Number>> or a local ambulance company.
- While awaiting emergency transport, remove the athlete from the heat and cool them with cold, wet towels applied to the body – specifically, the underarms, groin, and head.

- Thunderstorms and Lightning

Lightning is a potential severe hazard and life-threatening consequence of an approaching storm near outdoor activities. It is important to be prepared for the immediate cessation of all matches or warm-ups in the event of lightning.

In essence, if lightning is sighted, stop all activity and direct everyone to seek appropriate shelter. A 30-30 rule may be used, as follows:

- If lightning is sighted and thunder occurs in 30 seconds or less, instruct everyone onsite to seek appropriate shelter. Dividing the number of seconds between lightning and thunder by 5 gives the distance of lightning in miles. (For example, a flash-to-bang count of 30 seconds means a distance of 6 miles.)
- Resume outdoor sports activity after a minimum of 30 minutes has elapsed since the last lightning strike was seen. The primary shelter choice is any substantial, frequently inhabited building with working electricity, telephones, and plumbing. While inside, avoid using electrical devices or telephones attached to cords, and refrain from taking showers. If such a building is unavailable, the next safest location is a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and closed windows. Do not touch the metal framework while inside the vehicle.
- Avoid the following locations: open fields, proximity to open water, trees, flag poles, and light poles.

If anyone has been struck by lightning, activate emergency medical services immediately. If possible, move the injured person to a safer location.

- For Highly Technical/Unique/Dangerous Sports

Consider imposing specific experiential requirements for coaches to ensure that they have sufficient coaching training and/or real-life experience participating in the sport as a condition of hire. Also impose or consider imposing and/or enforcing age limitations for safety as consistent with national and international governing body rules.

- For Equipment Sports

Consider including relevant provisions for the safe use of the equipment, including training regarding the use of sporting equipment for Minor Athletes and implementation of a schedule for regular inspection, maintenance, and replacement of sporting equipment and implements.

- For Endurance Sports

Consider including sport-appropriate guidance for ensuring athletes' proper nutrition and hydration during training, including training regarding caloric needs of youth athletes, making informed nutrition choices, and strategies for effective fueling and hydration before, during, and after competitions. Also consider implementation of positive coaching practices designed to promote health body image and self-esteem.

- For Outdoor Sports

Consider including protocols for thunder and lightning, including ceasing all activity, directing athletes and spectators to seek appropriate shelter, avoiding open fields/proximity to open water/trees/flag poles/light poles, and resuming activity only when safe to do so.

- Additional Environmental Safety Protocols:

<<Option for Additional Section for Environmental Safety Protocol (based on your risk assessment and needs for your organization)>>

Reporting Procedures

For avoidance of doubt, every Participant or other adult who is subject to this Policy is a Mandated Reporter and is required to report suspected or actual abuse or misconduct as a fundamental tenant of this Policy. Failure to report suspected abuse or misconduct is a violation of this Policy. If you see something, say something.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the designated safeguarding officer, <<Safeguarding Officer>>, using the following method:

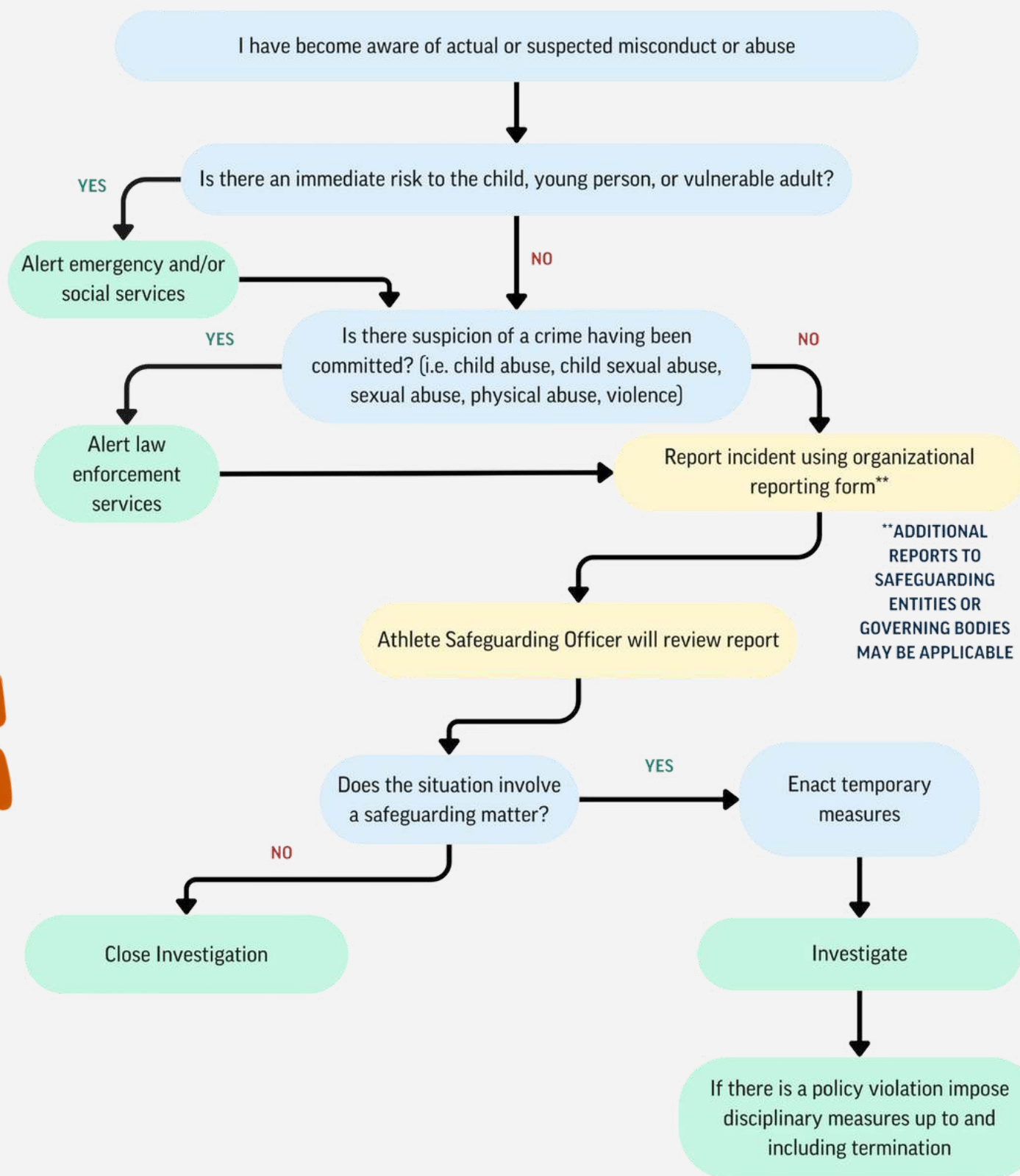
- **Safeguarding Report Email:** <<Secure Safeguarding Report Email>>
- **Safeguarding Officer Name:** <<Safeguarding Officer Name>>
- **Safeguarding Officer Phone Number:** <<Safeguarding Officer Phone Number>>
- **Safeguarding Officer Email:** <<Safeguarding Officer Email>>

Steps to Report:

- Incident Occurs: You either observe or have had someone disclose an incident of abuse or misconduct.
 - If there are immediate safety concerns, contact local authorities for help to ensure the safety of everyone involved.
- Am I required to report this incident to local authorities per jurisdiction regulations as a mandated reporter?
 - If yes, do so. Be sure to comply with timeliness per local jurisdiction requirements.
 - If no, proceed.
- Fill out the Reporting Form below, which will automatically be sent to the organization's dedicated safeguarding email address.
 - This must be done within <<Number of hours (legal requirement detailing how soon after abuse that a report must be made)>> hours of the incident.
- Your duty to report has been completed. The safeguarding officer will complete the next steps.
 - The safeguarding officer will review the report and enact temporary safeguarding measures to ensure the safety of all participants and stakeholders.
 - See Safeguarding Policy Appendix 3: Recommended Guide for Safeguarding Officer(s) Handling Reports and Investigations for more details on enacting temporary measures.
 - The safeguarding officer will maintain confidentiality and provide supportive resources to all parties involved.
 - The safeguarding officer will work with local authorities as applicable.
 - The safeguarding officer will work with the organization's safeguarding team to gather additional information as necessary and enact decisions and outcomes from the investigation. This could include but is not limited to the removal of the persons from the organization and its programming.

Placeholder for your organization's Reporting Form

Example Reporting Flow Chart



Anonymous Reporting

Anonymous reports of Abuse or Misconduct may be made by submitting a Reporting Form to <<Secure Safeguarding Report Email>>. Adult Participants who choose to report Misconduct anonymously are still required to comply with all applicable mandatory reporting laws.

Retaliation

<<Organization Name>> will not encourage, allow, or tolerate attempts from any individual to retaliate, punish, or in any way harm any individual(s) who reports a concern to law enforcement, <<Organization Name>>, or otherwise in good faith. Such actions against a complainant will be considered a violation of this Safeguarding Policy and grounds for disciplinary action by <<Organization Name>>.

Confidentiality

<<Organization Name>> recognizes the sensitive and serious nature of allegations of abuse and strives to keep the identity, subject of any complaint, and related information confidential to the full extent possible. <<Organization Name>> requests that all reporters, interviewees, and subjects similarly respect the confidential nature of allegations and possible investigations. Failing to keep the details of any investigations or accusations private will subject persons to discipline, up to and including termination.

Reciprocity


<<Organization Name>> shall, to the extent it is able, enforce any suspension or other sanction issued by the relevant National Governing Body (<<NGB>>) or any other Governing Body against an Adult Participant, even if arising from allegations occurring outside of <<Organization Name>> programs or sanctioned tournaments and events.

Training <<Organization Name>> will provide training on safeguarding and this policy to stakeholders and participants upon joining the organization and, at a minimum, annually.

- **Safeguarding** <<Officer, and/or Safeguarding Team>>: Must additionally complete <<Training Requirement for Safeguarding Team/Officers>> annually.
- **Coaches and Staff:** Must additionally complete <<Training Requirement for Coaches and Staff>> annually.
- **Athletes:** Must additionally complete <<Training Requirement for Athletes>> annually.
- **Others** - <<i.e., Board Members, volunteers, interns, ambassadors, contractors, etc.>> : Must additionally complete <<Training Requirement for Others>> annually.
- **Parents:** Can additionally complete <<Training Requirement for Parents>> annually.

Review and Updates The <<Organization Name>> safeguarding team will regularly update this policy at least annually, always in compliance with local requirements.

Approval This policy has been approved by the leadership of <<Organization Name>> on <<Date>>.



Acknowledgment By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the safeguarding policy and commit to follow the Code of Conduct and reporting procedures at <<Organization Name>>. If I have any questions or concerns about the contents of this policy, I will contact <<Safeguarding Officer>> at <<Safeguarding Officer Email>>.

Printed Name of Minor (under 18)

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

OR

Printed Name of Individual (18 or over)

Signature of Individual

Date



Appendix 1: Safeguarding Officer Contact Information

Any individual with concerns about an athlete's welfare should contact the Safeguarding Officer and report those concerns using the Reporting Form within this Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding Team:

- **Safeguarding Officer Name:** <<Safeguarding Officer Name>>
- **Safeguarding Officer Phone Number:** <<Safeguarding Officer Phone Number>>
- **Safeguarding Officer Email:** <<Safeguarding Officer Email>>
- **Additional contact details for other Safeguarding Team members:** <<Contact details for Safeguarding Team as applicable with names, positions, phone numbers and emails>>

The Safeguarding Officer who is responsible [if applicable] with the assistance and input from the Safeguarding Team for implementing <<Organization Name>>'s Safeguarding Policy and is primarily responsible for:

- keeping up to date with new developments in applicable laws and best practices pertaining to youth safeguarding in sports and developing protocols;
- ensuring that all safeguarding issues are responded to appropriately;
- ensuring that all <<Organization Name>> Participants have access to the Policy and assisting them in understanding the Policy;
- coordinating <<Organization Name>> trainings and promoting safeguarding awareness;
- monitoring the <<Secure Safeguarding Report Email>> inbox and responding appropriately, as well as responding appropriately when reports are made via telephone or in person;
- conducting risk assessments and action plans;
- reporting allegations of misconduct to law enforcement and any applicable Governing Body as required;
- investigating allegations of misconduct (as permissible and appropriate); and
- implementing the appropriate interim and temporary measures as well as taking appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in their sole discretion after assessing the relevant report, any relevant documents, and conducting and assessing party/witness interviews. Such measures and actions are binding on all parties involved.

In all instances, the safety, health, and wellbeing of the involved athlete(s) should guide the Athlete Safeguarding Officer decision-making, and where there is any doubt, deference should be given to the athlete.

Appendix 2: *Placeholder for your organization's Risk Assessment*

Appendix 2: Risk Identification

- Take the time to be thorough and work through this form from your perspective, as well as from the viewpoint of each organizational stakeholder group (coaches, parents, athletes, etc.).
- Walk through and/or visualize each aspect and element of your organizational activities, processes, and programming to identify any potential risks pertaining to safety and abuse prevention for all participants.

Label each risk identified as a type of risk:

- Environmental risk
 - For example, this could include risks associated with weather, such as lightning and heat, or sports-related risks, including concussions.
- Safeguarding risk:
 - For example, this could include risks associated with abuse and misconduct. This could include online and in-person communication, travel arrangements, and both physical and non-physical interactions.
- Organizational risk:
 - For example, this could include financial and legal risks, institutional betrayal, or compliance issues.

Then, describe the necessary mitigation needed for each risk identified.

Type of Risk	Description of the Risk	Mitigation Type Needed	Description of Mitigation Needed

Appendix 3: Guidance for Safeguarding Officer(s) Handling Reports and Investigations

Report Intake

The Safeguarding Officer must: (1) ensure that <<Organization Name>> has a dedicated safeguarding email address (<<Secure Safeguarding Report Email>>); (2) review the safeguarding email inbox daily, including logging when the inbox is checked; (3) create an automated response that confirms receipt of any message that comes into the safeguarding inbox; and (4) respond to emails that come into the safeguarding inbox in a timely manner and in no instance more than 24 hours after an email comes in. The Safeguarding Officer may also receive reports of allegations of misconduct directly (i.e., in person or at their <<Organization Name>> email address).

Handling Investigations

A critical component of the Safeguarding Officer's work is overseeing internal investigations relating to allegations of misconduct. The Safeguarding Officer (or a third party at the Safeguarding Officer and/or <<Organization Name>> direction) **must investigate thoroughly all reported allegations of misconduct.**

For sports that are part of a National Governing Body under the auspices of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the Safeguarding Officer may only investigate allegations of misconduct that do not fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport. For non-USOPC sports, the <<Organization Name>> Safeguarding Officer (or a third party at the Safeguarding Officer must investigate all reported allegations of misconduct.

For any allegations of misconduct that are reported to the Athlete Safeguarding Officer that fall or may fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Center, **the Safeguarding Officer must report to the Center** (and to law enforcement if warranted or appropriate). The Safeguarding Officer may impose interim measures to ensure athlete safety at any time, up and until the Center takes jurisdiction of the matter and imposes their own measures.

Athlete safety is paramount to <<Organization Name>>, and the Athlete Safeguarding Officer is empowered to implement any reasonable measures that will keep the athlete(s) safe, as a primary and guiding consideration, as well as any employment action that <<Organization Name>> deems appropriate in the circumstances.

Investigations

When appropriate and not in conflict with any concurrent investigations by law enforcement or the Center, Safeguarding Officers must conduct an impartial and confidential investigation into reported allegations of misconduct, which includes an assessment of the allegations raised and determination of next steps.

A thorough investigation requires, at a minimum:

- witness interviews;
- a diligent review of relevant documentation;
- credibility determinations;
- a record of factual findings;
- an assessment of reporting obligations, and
- disciplinary recommendations (see below for suggested disciplinary action). (1)

Below are several steps that are essential to conducting an investigation with the highest integrity.

(1) In some instances, where the situation is more complex or involves a major stakeholder in the club, the Safeguarding Officer, together with the club, should consider engaging outside counsel to perform the investigation.

- **Investigating allegations:** Upon receiving a report of misconduct, the Safeguarding Officer should:
 - Implement any protocols to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the parties involved, as well as the confidentiality of the matter.
 - Implement any temporary or interim safety measures as needed, particularly as directed to anyone accused of engaging in misconduct. These measures should be communicated expediently and spelled out in writing to ensure no misunderstanding around the requirements and expectations. Below is an example of a suggested communication:

Re: "Notice of Temporary Measures – Urgent – HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL"

It has come to our attention that you may have engaged in serious misconduct that does not align with the values or mission of our club. While an investigation takes place, we are imposing the following temporary measures:

No contact: *You are prohibited from having any contact, whether in person, via telephone, on digital platform(s) or any other means, with any club athletes, coaches, or other personnel. To be clear, you may not contact anyone at the club for any reason (except as to any questions you have about this email, which is noted below).*

Temporary suspension: *You are hereby suspended from your duties at the club until further notice. You are not to appear in person or otherwise at the club, the gym, the court, or any tournaments or competitions where the club may be playing.*

If you have any questions, please direct them to the Safeguarding Officer only. These temporary measures will hereby be imposed and remain in effect until we advise otherwise. The club reserves any and all rights to take any further employment or disciplinary action in the club's sole discretion.

- Conduct an initial assessment of the written or verbal report.
 - Speak with the parties involved, including any witnesses. When speaking with parties and witnesses, the Athlete Safeguarding Officer should listen intently, provide time and space for each individual to provide relevant information, reassure any reporter that they did the right thing by coming forward, and exercise caution and sensitivity when advising on next steps, particularly around confidentiality.
- **Taking disciplinary action:** After assessing the report, documents, and party/witness interviews, the Safeguarding Officer will be empowered to assess what, if any, disciplinary measure to impose, up to and including termination or removal from participation in sport. This is at the discretion of the Athlete Safeguarding Officer and will be binding on all parties involved (as set forth in <<Organization Name>> Policy). **In all instances, the health, wellbeing, and safety of the involved athlete(s) should guide the Safeguarding Officer decision-making, and where there is any doubt, deference should be given to the athlete.**

Cadence and Conclusion of an Investigation

An investigation should be conducted swiftly. All direct parties should be kept apprised of the progress of the matter, as is reasonable and without compromising the integrity of the investigation or violating the confidentiality of the parties involved. The Safeguarding Officer should keep a file marked "Highly Confidential" with a log of all reported incidents, including the date and time of the report, the notes of the investigation, the outcome, and the length of time of the investigation before resolution. **As a best practice**, any investigation should be concluded **within three months** from receipt of the initial complaint.

General Outcomes

Generally, there are four kinds of outcomes for reports made to Safeguarding Officers.



*A reminder that these are for matters that have not otherwise been reported to the Center because the Center does not have jurisdiction (i.e., if it is a non-US Olympic Movement participant/club).

** Depending on the nature and severity of the violations, the following sanctions may be contemplated:

- Written or verbal apology;
- Formal warning;
- Fine or restitution (context dependent);
- Probation;
- Training and/or supervision;
- Temporary suspension;
- Termination of participation with <<Organization Name>> (i.e., coaching, working, playing, volunteering, spectating, etc.); and
- Any other sanction that <<Organization Name>> deems warranted or appropriate.

Conflicts

If the Safeguarding Officer is conflicted for any reason, whether actual or perceived, the deputy (alongside the club, where appropriate) must designate a third party to perform the investigation. If the Safeguarding Officer fails to recuse themselves when an actual or perceived conflict exists, they can be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Appendix 4: Guidance to Safe Recruitment Protocols

The following measures can be taken during the recruitment process to minimize the possibility of hiring a person unsuitable to work with minors.

Candidate Profile

Determine what skills and knowledge are needed to safely work with minors, and include these in the profile. This will depend on the position—for example, a coach will have more contact and need better skills working with children than someone in an administrative or ground keeper's role.

Advertisement

Include a clear statement about <<Organization Name>>'s commitment to safeguarding minors in any advertisement about the position. <<Organization Name>> can also add a screen-out question in the application process regarding an applicant's willingness to participate in a particular background screening as a condition of employment.

Written Applications

Each applicant for a position of employment with or seeking to participate in a <<Organization Name>> program or activity will complete an application form consisting of personal, identifying information and a general release with applicant's signature.

The written application will:

- Ask about previous work and volunteer experiences;
- Ask questions intended to elicit information concerning high-risk behaviors;
- Provide a written release for contacting personal references and performing a criminal background check, including an indemnification clause; and
- Ask open-ended questions that encourage broad answers.

Personal Interview

When possible, <<Organization Name>> should ensure that each applicant whose experience and credentials meet the hiring criteria for a particular position receives a face-to-face, in-person interview. Through the personal interview, the Club has the opportunity to evaluate applicants' temperament, knowledge of the sport, coaching techniques, and/or training methodologies (if required for the job position), and to have open-ended discussions regarding an applicant's experience working with minors, including their understanding of athlete safeguarding principles and any situations that may call into question the applicant's suitability to work with Minor Athletes. Interview questions should explore, for example, how an applicant would respond if they suspected that a Minor Athlete was being subjected to abuse or sexual misconduct; whether the applicant has been subject to disciplinary action due to their interactions with minors; and how the applicant maintains appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors.

- Ensure at least two people interview or meet with the applicant and check out any gaps in the application form, including any gaps in employment history. Make sure the applicant has the ability and commitment to meet the standards required to adhere to the Athlete Safeguarding Policy.
- Include at least one question that relates to safeguarding children and young people.
- Explore the applicant's views on power, authority, and discipline, and ask for a response to a potential problem faced at <<Organization Name>>. This will assess their commitment to promoting good practices and their ability to communicate with Minor Athletes.

Reference Checks Reference checks are another key component of the background screening processes, as they serve to provide the Club with a more thorough understanding of an applicant's qualifications. Checking references also puts the Club in a better position to avoid claims of negligent hiring.

As a best practice, the Club should request **at least two personal references** and **at least one professional reference** from each former employer at which the applicant worked directly with minors. References should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee using an email address, postal address, or phone number. Open references (i.e., a written reference provided by the candidate) are not sufficient.

The reference checks should include inquiries to determine whether the applicant was the subject of any reports of inappropriate conduct with minors including grooming behaviors, child abuse, or sexual misconduct.

During the hiring process, the Club may also contact individuals who know the applicant, even if such individuals are not listed on the applicant's provided reference list. This is an acceptable practice and may often lead to valuable information regarding sensitive information, such as incidents of previous safeguarding concerns, inappropriate adult-minor interactions, and observed grooming behaviors.

Education and Employment Verification

To help ensure that an applicant possesses the requisite training, knowledge, skills, and experience for the role to which they applied, the Club should verify the applicant's education, degrees, experience, and/or employment history, as described in their job application and/or resume. The verification may be performed by the Athlete Safeguarding Officer or other Club employee responsible for conducting background checks.

Qualification and Registration Checks

Any qualifications or professional registrations claimed in the application should be verified by asking to see original certificates.

Motor Vehicle Records Check

Anyone who will be driving Minor Athletes on behalf of the Club is required to undergo a motor vehicle records check that provides information regarding the applicant's driving record for at least the past three years in the applicant's state of licensure.

Background and Police Checks

<<Organization Name>> should engage a qualified third party⁽²⁾ to conduct a comprehensive background check.

- **USA:** A Criminal Record Check must be conducted. This check is conducted by a qualified third party and includes a Social Security Trace (identity verification), Sex Offender Records Search, National Criminal Search, Country Criminal Search, and possibly the running of a Credit Report if it is relevant to the position.
- **International:** When recruiting an employee from another country, the person should be asked for an International Police Clearance Certificate (IPCC) from their country of origin and from any other countries they have worked in for the last 10 years.

Proof of Identification

Candidates' identities must be verified by checking their passport or national ID card, as predatory offenders may provide false information and even a false identity to secure a position.

CDD Check

Before extending an offer, the Club should enter the name of the applicant into the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Centralized Disciplinary Registry ("CDD"). Any applicant who is banned from sport may not be hired.

Internet/Social Media Checks

Before extending an offer, the Club may consider entering an applicant's name into one or more general search engines to see if the applicant appears on any websites or in any form of news media coverage in a manner that violates <<Organization Name>> Policy.

(2) Examples of background check companies include: Praesidium, Inc. www.praesidiuminc.com (focused on helping organizations prevent sexual abuse, including training, consulting, risk management, and responding to incidents of sexual abuse); HireRight www.hireright.com (tailor background screening packages based on industry, including industries that regularly work with minors); and Sterling Check www.sterlingcheck.com (national background check company).



Self-declaration

Applicants may complete and sign a declaration of good character, including a section confirming they are safe to work with children and giving permission for checks to be made. A sample statement can include: “I confirm that I have never been involved, charged, or implicated in any manner of whatsoever nature involving inappropriate behavior in regard to any minor or adult.”

Acknowledgement of the Athlete Safeguarding Policy

To ensure that applicants support the Club’s commitment to safeguarding principles and understand the <<Organization Name>> Safeguarding Policy, the Club should ensure that each applicant, before proceeding through the hiring process, (1) is informed about <<Organization Name>>’s Safeguarding Policy and procedures relevant to prevention and (2) is willing to sign a document acknowledging their agreement to comply with <<Organization Name>>’s Safeguarding Policy.

Onboarding

As soon as possible after starting at <<Organization Name>>, staff should be briefed on <<Organization Name>> Safeguarding Policy. The name and contact details of the designated Safeguarding Officer should be provided.



Appendix 5: Guidance to Address Sport-Specific Provisions

The below may supplement the Athlete Safeguarding Policy on a sport-specific basis.

For Combat Sports (wrestling, judo, fencing, boxing, etc.):

Under the definition of “Physical Misconduct,” include: Physical Misconduct does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sports and/or conduct reasonably accepted as part of the Minor Athlete’s participation.

For Sports with Fitting Uniforms (gymnastics, swimming, diving, cycling, figure skating, volleyball, etc.):

Under the section on “Emotional Misconduct,” include: Emotional Misconduct also includes verbal abuse surrounding physical appearance and body shaming (i.e., subjecting someone to humiliation and criticism for their bodily features).

Under the section on “Sexual Misconduct,” include: Sexual Misconduct also includes inappropriate comments about athletes’ uniforms and/or uniform coverage, making inappropriate/sexualized jokes regarding uniforms, and preventing athletes from covering up with additional clothing during practices.

For Sports with a Hair/Cap Component (swimming, diving, etc.):

Under the section on “Discrimination,” include: As permitted by <<Organization Name>>, national and international governing bodies, athletes may opt to use swim caps specifically designed for natural, curly, and protective hairstyles.

For Team Sports (soccer, baseball, basketball, etc.):

Under the section on “Bullying,” include: Bullying also includes two or more teammates “ganging-up” on an individual team member, intentionally excluding a team member from team activities, or otherwise isolating, shaming, harassing, or excluding a team member.

Under the section on “Hazing,” include: Hazing does not include group or team activities that are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or promote team cohesion, so long as such activities do not have reasonable potential to cause emotional or physical distress to any participant.

For Sports that involve Spotting and other Physical Contact (gymnastics, etc.):

Under the section on “Other Inappropriate Conduct,” include: Other Inappropriate Conduct does not include spotting an athlete so that they will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment; positioning an athlete’s body so that they more quickly acquire an athletic skill, get a better sense of where their body is in space, or improve their balance and coordination; or touching an athlete for purposes of taping or wrapping an injury, provided the interaction is observable and interruptible. Where possible, however, consent should be obtained before making physical contact with an athlete - for example, before touching the athlete to demonstrate a particular position, skill, or exercise.

For Sports that Involve One-on-One Partners (dance, doubles skating, etc.):

Under the section on “Other Inappropriate Conduct,” include: Best efforts shall be made to obtain informed consent in advance and on an ongoing basis to any skills that involve physical touching and body contact, including involving a third party to act as a coordinator to ensure athlete safety and comfort - and to facilitate a productive dialogue around - the touching and contact.


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SET Resources





RESOURCES

- #WeRideTogether
 - Safeguarding | Athletics for a Better World
 - Safeguarding Resources & Guides - ACT
 - Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls in Sport
 - International Safeguards for Children in Sport
 - Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies
 - Athlete Bill of Rights
 - Safeguarding athletes from harassment and abuse in sport IOC Toolkit for IFs and NOCs
 - World Athletics | Book of Rules | Official Documents
 - Health & Science | Official Documents
 - Safeguarding Sport
 - Centre for Sport and Human Rights
 - Concussion Legacy Foundation
 - Sports Law Business and Legal Services for Athletes
 - USOPC - Athlete Legal Aid Program
 - The Fierberg National Law Group – **Mention #WeRideTogether to receive a free consultation from the firm**
- 

We All Have a Role to Play

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13-15

years old is the average age of the first incidence of abuse in sport

>50%

of athletes experience abuse in sport

Peers

and authority figures are the most common perpetrators of abuse in sport



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