

USA Surfing is committed to protecting
the well-being of its participants by
creating a safe and positive environment
free of physical, emotional or sexual
misconduct

USA Surfing SurfSafe Policy

usasurfing.org



USA Surfing SurfSafe Policy: Protecting Surfers from Misconduct

May 30, 2026

Applies to: Participants

A. Purpose

PART I: OVERVIEW

USA Surfing is committed to protecting the well-being of its Participants by creating a safe and positive environment free of physical, emotional or sexual misconduct. This policy defines what conduct is strictly prohibited and sets forth the education requirements, prevention methods, reporting process, resolution procedure and outlines potential consequences for violations. There are 6 sections to this policy, which are:

- Part I: Overview
- Part II: Prohibited Conduct
- Part III: Reporting
- Part IV: Adjudication
- Part V: Updated MAAPP
- Part VI: Surfing Obligations

USA Surfing is currently under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the “Center”). USA Surfing, the International Surfing Association’s (ISA) recognized National Federation for the sport of surfing, an Olympic sport, has adopted definitions of the Center’s SafeSport Code (the “Code”) to align with the broader Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Additionally, USA Surfing will report to the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) in instances when the allegation/violation occurred under the USOPC’s jurisdiction. USA Surfing will always report to law enforcement when required.

US Center for SafeSport

Established in 2017, the U.S. Center for SafeSport is the independent and exclusive authority directed by Congress to prevent and respond to all forms of abuse and misconduct within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

The Center is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization headquartered in Denver, Colorado. The Center receives, investigates, and responds to reports of abuse and misconduct from individuals affiliated with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and its National Governing Bodies (NGBs).

The Center ensures that the USOPC and NGBs properly apply policies and procedures to govern abuse prevention and maintains a database of individuals sanctioned from participation in their sport. Throughout the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, the Center trains athletes, parents,



coaches, volunteers, and organizations at all levels on best practices and principles for preventing abuse in sport settings. In doing so, the Center advances its mission of making athlete well-being the center of our nation's sports culture through abuse prevention, education, and accountability.

- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Homepage](#)
- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Policies](#)
- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#)
- [How to Report](#)

The Center's Response and Resolution process has three steps:

1) Reporting and Intake 2) Investigation and 3) Resolution. The infographic [Infographic](#) details the process and the Center has also developed informational videos [informational videos](#) that detail the steps that are taken by the Center. The Center also has a dedicated staff person available to respond to questions about the process: resource.advisor@safesport.org or by calling 833-5US-SAFE.

B. Definitions

The below definitions are applicable to this policy:

- "Adult Participant" – An individual who is 18 years of age or older.
- "Claimant"¹ – USA Surfing, the entity that brings forth and adjudicates the case against the Respondent and has the burden of proof.
- "Minor Participant" – An individual who or is believed by the Respondent to be, under the age of 18.
- "Respondent:" A Participant who is alleged to have violated the SurfSafe policy.
- "Survivor/Victim" - The person who is reported to have experienced conduct that constitutes a SurfSafe violation.

¹ Under the Center's SafeSport Code, the Claimant has the definition of "Survivor/Victim" herein.



C. Applicability

This policy applies to the following individuals defined as a “Participant” by USA Surfing. A Participant will be included under this policy as long as he/she is seeking to be, currently is, or was at the time of any alleged violation of Prohibited Conduct:

- Board Members + Officers
- Employees²
- Standing Committee Members
- Advisory Group Members
- Athletes’ Advisory Council Members
- Individual Members:
 - Athletes
 - Coaches
 - Judges
- SUP and Prone Race Coaches, Officials, and Race Director
- SUP and Prone Race Athletes*
- Contractors (as designated by USA Surfing)
- Volunteers with Regular Contact or Authority (e.g. medical providers, chaperones, interns)
- Volunteers without Regular Contact or Authority**
- Vendors** (as designated by USA Surfing)

*SUP and Prone Race Events are one-day, on-site events. Athletes who participate in a SUP and Prone Race sanctioned event and do not otherwise fall within another Participant category are not required to complete the education and training requirements defined in Part I. However, these individuals must still adhere to the MAAPP Required Prevention Policies.

**Optional Training (D1)

D. Jurisdiction

USA shall have jurisdiction to investigate and resolve all allegations of Prohibited Conduct, including sexual misconduct, if the Respondent is a Participant and the Prohibited Misconduct took place at a:

- USA Surfing-sanctioned competition
- USA Surfing training Site



- Any other event or activity, including but not limited to, travel, lodging, practice, competition, and health or medical treatment which is organized, operated, formally sanctioned or formally authorized by USA Surfing

USA Surfing shall also have jurisdiction over any alleged Prohibited Conduct if it took place during proceedings, including investigations and hearings, addressed in this policy



PART II: PROHIBITED CONDUCT

A. Overview

The following constitutes “Prohibited Conduct” under this Policy, as adopted and incorporated herein from the definition of Prohibited Conduct as defined in the Center’s Code, which can be found at: [SafeSport Code](#), with the exception that anything that refers to the Center or the Code will be replaced by USA Surfing or the SurfSafe Policy.

SurfSafe sets forth the below list of conduct that will not be tolerated in the sport of surfing. This includes conduct related to emotional, physical and sexual misconduct, along with bullying, hazing and harassment. The privilege of participation in surfing may be limited, conditioned, suspended, terminated, or denied if a Participant’s conduct is or was inconsistent with the SurfSafe Policy or the best interest of surfing.

B. Types of Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct will be assessed at the time of the alleged violation. Prohibited conduct, as mirrored from the Code, includes:

- Criminal Charges or Dispositions
- Child Abuse
- Sexual Misconduct
- Emotional and Physical Misconduct, including Stalking, Bullying, Hazing, and Harassment
- Other Inappropriate Conduct
- Aiding and Abetting
- Misconduct Related to Reporting
- Misconduct Related to USA Surfing’s Process (Abuse of Process)
- Retaliation
- Violation of USA Surfing Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP)

USA Surfing will not tolerate Prohibited Conduct and will treat each allegation with the utmost attention and responsiveness.



PART III: REPORTING

A. Overview

This section addresses: (i) how to report allegations of Prohibited Conduct, (ii) reporting obligations and (iii) USA Surfing investigation of reports.

B. How to Report Allegations of Prohibited Conduct Reporting

1. Reporting Center for SafeSport

The Center is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization headquartered in Denver, Colorado. The Center receives, investigates, and responds to reports of abuse and misconduct from individuals affiliated with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and its National Governing Bodies (NGBs).

The Center ensures that the USOPC and NGBs properly apply policies and procedures to govern abuse prevention and maintains a database of individuals sanctioned from participation in their sport. Throughout the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, the Center trains athletes, parents, coaches, volunteers, and organizations at all levels on best practices and principles for preventing abuse in sport settings. In doing so, the Center advances its mission of making athlete well-being the center of our nation's sports culture through abuse prevention, education, and accountability.

- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Homepage](#)
- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Policies](#)
- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#)
- [How to Report](#)

2. USA Surfing Reporting Process. Any individual may submit a report for alleged violations of the SurfSafe Policy through the following methods:

- i. Online Submission form (and click "Athlete Safety) at:
<https://www.usasurfing.org/dispute-resolution.html>
- ii. Email: admin@usasurfing.org.
- iii. Phone: 949-391-1010

3. Recommended Information in the Report. Information that an individual should report includes the name and contact information for any witnesses and Claimant(s), the alleged prohibited conduct that was violated, and any and all information related to the incident, whether material or not. The more information that is included will help the investigation.

4. Anonymous Reporting. Reports may be made anonymously. Individuals must understand that reporting anonymously may hinder USA Surfing's ability to conduct a thorough investigation, but USA Surfing will never prohibit an anonymous report.



5. Fees. There is no cost or fee associated with filing a report for any allegation of prohibited conduct under this policy.
6. Investigation Prior to Reporting. Participants should not investigate or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of allegations involving Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse. Participants making a good faith report are not required to prove the reports are true before reporting to the USA Surfing or appropriate authorities.

C. Reporting Obligations

1. Mandatory Reporters. Adult Participants shall report:
 - a. Observed or reasonably suspected violations of the SurfSafe Policy, and USA Surfing's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP).
 - b. Observed or reasonably suspected allegations of child abuse. This includes incidents that involve a victim who was a minor at the time of the alleged incident but may now be an adult.



- c. All cases of suspected child abuse, to include emotional, physical or sexual abuse of a minor (under the age of 18) must be reported to law enforcement and any applicable state law requirements immediately. Mandatory reporters must comply with any other applicable reporting requirements under state and federal law.
2. Permissive Reporters. Any individual may report: observed or suspected violations of this Policy, the Code, the MAAPP, or reasonably suspected allegations of child abuse.
3. Non-obligated Reporters. Nothing herein shall be construed to require a victim of child abuse or other misconduct to self-report.
4. Reporting to Law Enforcement. Adult Participants must adhere to any other reporting requirements under federal or state law.
5. Ongoing reporting obligation. Adult Participants have an on-going obligation to report, any new information that may arise.
6. Bad Faith Reports. Any report which the individual made that was knowingly false, with good reason to believe that it was false will in itself be a violation of this Policy. Any such report may be subject to disciplinary action.
7. USOPC Athlete Safety Reporting.
 - a. Individuals Receiving USOPC funds/benefits. Surfing will notify the USOPC's Security and Athlete Safety Office via email at athlete.safety@usopc.org as soon as possible, and in any case within 24 hours of imposing its own sanction(s) and/or temporary measure(s) that affecting any surfers who receive USOPC funds/benefits. Notification will also be provided to the USOPC's Security and Athlete Safety Office via e-mail at athlete.safety@usopc.org in the event of any change or removal of any such sanction and/or temporary measures within 24 hours of such change.
 - b. Prohibited Conduct under USOPC Jurisdiction. USA Surfing will notify the USOPC's Security and Athlete Safety Office via e-mail at athlete.safety@usopc.org as soon as possible, and in any case within 24 hours of learning of an allegation of Prohibited Conduct, that occurred at an Olympic & Paralympic Training Center or at any third party-sponsored event in which the USOPC sends a delegation. Any temporary measures imposed by USA Surfing in response to the allegation must be included in the required notification.

D. USA Surfing Investigation of Report

1. Initial Evaluation.

Once USA Surfing receives a report of an alleged violation of this policy, it will immediately look into the report to determine its next steps and whether a full investigation or warranted, or if it should be dismissed. Dismissal at this stage will only be warranted when it is egregiously outside the scope of the purview of this policy or has absolutely no basis. *For example*, if someone mistakenly clicked the "athlete safety" button on the online portal and the incident relates to a personal physical injury (with no external misconduct on the matter), USA Surfing may contact the reporter to clarify the report and may determine that it does not fall within the purview of this policy.



2. Investigation. The investigation process shall follow the process as outlined in USA Surfing's Complaint Resolution Policy, including the pursuit or non-pursuit of the matter.

3. Interference.

USA Surfing and any participants shall not interfere in, attempt to interfere in, or attempt to influence the outcome of any investigation.



PART IV: ADJUDICATION

A. Overview

USA Surfing is committed to efficiently and effectively resolve allegations of a SurfSafe violation in a manner that is fair and just to all involved. Due to the sensitive nature of some SurfSafe alleged violations, special safeguards may be implemented during the hearing process. USA Surfing is unwavering in its priority to protect any victim/survivor or vulnerable person, including minors. The hearing process is outlined in USA Surfing's Complaint Resolution Policy found at usasurfing.org.

B. Temporary Measures

1. **Definition.** USA Surfing adopts the same terminology for a "Temporary Measure," from the Code, along with the standards for implementing a Temporary Measure. A Temporary Measure is a restriction, limitation, condition, or suspension of a Respondent's ability to participate in the Movement that is imposed or adopted by USA Surfing.
2. **Implementation of a Temporary Measure.** USA Surfing may implement Temporary Measures at any time. A Temporary Measure shall be effective immediately upon notice, unless stated otherwise. Temporary Measure(s) will remain in effect until USA Surfing expressly removes the Temporary Measure(s).
3. **Considerations.** When implementing a Temporary Measure, USA Surfing evaluates:
 - a. The seriousness of the allegations and the circumstances of the case;
 - b. Whether the Respondent's continued participation in sport poses an ongoing or potential risk to the physical, emotional, or psychological well-being or safety of others, including but not limited to the Claimant, other Athletes, or the sport community; and
 - c. Whether the allegations against the Respondent are sufficiently serious that the Respondent's continued participation in the sport could be detrimental to the best interest of surfing and those who participate in it. When the allegations involve child sexual abuse, the age of those allegations shall not be considered and are not relevant to the assessment of Temporary Measures.
4. **Measures.** Temporary Measures may include, but are not limited to, altering training schedules, providing or requiring chaperones, implementing contact limitations, implementing measures prohibiting one-on-one interactions, and suspensions from participation in some or all aspects of sport activity. If measures require monitoring or chaperoning, the Respondent may be required to locate, arrange, and pay for some or all of those services as a condition of continued participation pending completion of the investigation.



5. Temporary Measures Hearing. See the USA Surfing Complaint Resolution Policy regarding information about the right to, and the process for, a Temporary Measures hearing.

C. Setting Matters Aside

1. Insufficient Information: Case on Hold. There may be instances where there is insufficient information to proceed with the case. For example, if a Claimant declines to participate, is non-responsive, or there is an unidentified Claimant. There may also be a lack of relevant documentary evidence. In such instances, the case will be placed on "Hold."
2. Re-opening a Case. USA Surfing may re-open a case on Hold at any time that new material evidence is brought forward or a change in circumstances that could substantially impact the original finding.

D. Opportunity for a Hearing

1. Complaint Resolution Policy. *The hearing process for allegations of violations of Prohibited Conduct shall follow the process set forth in USA Surfing's Complaint Resolution Policy.*
2. Rejection of Violation or Proposed Consequence. If the Respondent wants to challenge the violation and/or proposed consequence, the Respondent may request a hearing. The hearing process will be initiated in accordance with USA Surfing's Complaint Resolution Policy. A list of possible consequences are listed within that policy.
3. No Answer. If the Respondent does not reply to USA Surfing's notice within 15 days, the proposed consequence will then go into effect.
4. Informal Resolution. USA Surfing and the Respondent may agree to informally resolve the matter at any time prior to a final decision by the hearing panel.

E. Hearing & Appeals Process

The hearing and appeals process, if applicable, is outlined in USA Surfing's Complaint Resolution Policy which can be found online at usasurfing.org.



PART V: MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES (MAAPP)

A. OVERVIEW

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (the “Center”) developed the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies ([MAAPP](#)). USA Surfing is under the jurisdiction of the Center. USA Surfing has developed this policy as its testament and devotion to keeping athletes safe. The MAAPP is a collection of proactive prevention and training policies for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. It has three primary components:

1. An Education & Training Policy that requires training for certain Adult Participants within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement;
2. Required Prevention Policies, focused on limiting one-on-one interactions between Adult Participants and Minor Athletes, that Organizations within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement must implement to prevent abuse;
3. Recommended Prevention Policies.

USA Surfing will share these policies with Participants and with parents/guardians of minor athletes and will consider the physical and cognitive needs of all athletes when implementing these policies.

The MAAPP focuses on just two important aspects of a much larger comprehensive abuse prevention strategy. These policies address training requirements and limiting one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. These policies are intended to be enforceable and reasonable, acknowledging, for example, that when a 17-year-old athlete turns 18, they become an adult athlete, and a complete prohibition of one-on-one interactions may not be necessary or practical. Additionally, there may be other instances when one-on-one interactions could occur, and in those cases, these policies provide strategies so parents/guardians can provide informed consent if they choose to allow a permitted interaction. **USA Surfing recommends that parents first complete training on abuse prevention to be informed about potential boundary violations and concerns before consenting to the interaction. The complimentary training can be accessed at [SafeSportTrained.org](#).**

While the MAAPP will help organizations implement these policies to greatly improve minor athlete safety, in no way can they guarantee athlete safety in all circumstances, especially when the policies are not fully implemented, followed, or monitored. These policies are not comprehensive of all prevention strategies, nor are they intended to be. These policies should be implemented alongside the USA Surfing’s SurfSafe Policy. Additionally, other resources are available that may assist organizations in improving athlete safety.⁴

B. Compliance with MAAPP

⁴ Saul, J., & Audage, N. C. (2007). Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Canadian Centre for Child Protection. (2014). Child Sexual Abuse: It Is Your Business. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Canadian Centre for Child Protection. T
he Australian Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. (2017). Final Report.



it is the responsibility of USA Surfing and Adult Participants to comply with the MAAPP. USA Surfing can address violations of the MAAPP by Adult Participants in their respective programs. Adult Participants also have an independent responsibility to comply with these MAAPP provisions. Violations of these provisions can result in sanctions under USA Surfing's SurfSafe Policy.

C. MAAPP and USA Surfing's SurfSafe Policy

USA Surfing's SurfSafe Policy works alongside the MAAPP to prevent abuse. The MAAPP includes proactive prevention policies for organizations and individuals, while the USA Surfing's SurfSafe Policy contains misconduct policies for individuals. However, violations of the MAAPP can violate the USA Surfing's SurfSafe Policy, and violators who are also Participants can be sanctioned. Both of these components are incorporated together.

D. Scope and Definitions

The MAAPP is a required component of USA Surfing's minor abuse prevention policy. Please see updated [MAAPP](#).



PART VI: MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES (MAAPP): USA SURFING OBLIGATIONS

A. Overview.

USA Surfing will implement proactive policies designed to prevent abuse in its commitment to keep athletes safe from abuse. These requirements are described below.

B. USA Surfing Responsibilities for Education & Training

1. Tracking of Training. USA Surfing will track whether Adult Participants under its jurisdiction complete the required training.
2. Minor Athlete Training. USA Surfing will, every 12 months, offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to minor athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - i. For training to minor athletes, USA Surfing will track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to minor athletes.
 - ii. USA Surfing will not track individual course completions of minor athletes.
3. Parent Training. USA Surfing will, every 12 months, offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - i. For training to parents, USA Surfing will track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to parents.
 - ii. USA Surfing will not track individual course completions of parents.

C. USA Surfing Prevention Policies and Implementation

USA Surfing will develop minor athlete abuse prevention policies to limit one-on-one interactions between a USA Surfing Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant. These policies are included in Part VI and cover:

- i. Meetings
- ii. Individual training sessions
- iii. Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities and Manual Therapy
- iv. Locker rooms and changing areas
- v. Electronic communications
- vi. Transportation
- vii. Lodging and Residential Environments

USA Surfing will implement these policies for all In-Program contact that are at USA Surfing sanctioned events and facilities that are fully or partially under USA Surfing's jurisdiction. In-Program contact outside of USA Surfing's sanctioned events or facilities, USA Surfing will take all reasonable steps to



communicate the policies to individuals. USA Surfing will also investigate and enforce violation of these policies.

D. Communicating with the USOPC Security & Athlete Safety Office

1. *Prohibited Conduct Occurring Under USOPC's Jurisdiction*. USA Surfing will notify the USOPC's Security & Athlete Safety Office as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after learning of an allegation of Prohibited Conduct, that occurred at an Olympic & Paralympic Training Center ("OPTC"), a USOPC Sponsored Event, or at any third party sponsored event in which the USOPC sends a delegation (a "USOPC Delegation Event"). Any temporary measure(s) imposed by USA Surfing in response to an allegation will be included in the required notification (as described in the following section). This notification requirement is in addition to any other requirement to report an allegation to the Center and/or law enforcement. Any such notifications will be submitted by email to athlete.safety@usopc.org.
2. *Sanctions and Temporary Measures*. USA Surfing will notify the USOPC's Security & Athlete Safety Office as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours of imposing a sanction(s) and/or temporary measure(s), affecting Participants who USA Surfing knows, or reasonably expects, to:
 - i. Be nominated for or selected as a Participant to a USOPC Delegation Event,
 - ii. Be a Participant at a USOPC Sponsored Event,
 - iii. Have access to an OPTC, and/or
 - iv. Receive a benefit and/or service from the USOPC as outlined in the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy.
3. *Changes or Removal of Temporary Measures or Sanctions*. USA Surfing will notify the USOPC Security & Athlete Safety Office in the event of any change or removal of any such sanction and/or temporary measure(s) within 24 hours of such change by USA Surfing or notified of a change or removal by the Center. Any such notifications shall be submitted by email to athlete.safety@usopc.org.

E. Retaliation

USA Surfing does not tolerate any individual retaliating against someone for reporting an allegation of Prohibited Conduct under this policy. Retaliation or attempt to do the same by a participant, someone acting on behalf of a participant or USA Surfing is prohibited by USA Surfing. Retaliation is any adverse action or threat to take any adverse action against any person related to allegations of prohibited conduct. Adverse actions include, but are not limited to: threatening, intimidating, harassing, coercing, or any other action or conduct with the potential effect of dissuading any reasonable person from reporting a violation of this Policy, or the MAAPP or engaging in activity related to any reporting or investigative processes. Retaliation may take place at any time, including before, during, or after an individual's reporting or engagement in the processes of USA Surfing. Retaliation may be present even where there is a finding that no violation occurred. Retaliation does not include good-faith actions lawfully pursued in response to a report of a Code violation. USA Surfing will take disciplinary action on individuals who have been found in violation of this.



F. Tracking

USA Surfing will track all reports and cases brought under this policy and will retain them pursuant to USA Surfing's Document Retention Policy.

G. Team USA Athlete Resources

Team USA athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds for independent and confidential advice on a variety of sport related matters, including their rights, applicable rules, policies or processes, and questions related to resolving disputes and grievances. The Athlete Ombuds can also help Team USA athletes connect with legal counsel or mental health resources if needed. All other USA Surfing athletes (i.e., athletes competing domestically at the masters or youth level, recreational athletes, foreign athletes), are welcome to visit the Athlete Ombuds website to review informational resources and should work directly with USA Surfing to understand additional resources and options available to them.

Email: ombudsman@usathlete.org

Website: www.usathlete.org

H. Contact

The CEO is responsible for this Policy and its enforcement. If an individual is unsure about whether a matter might be a violation or are unsure about reporting responsibilities, you may reach out to USA Surfing at any time:

USA Surfing: admin@usasurfing.org