USA Surfing SurfSafe Policy: Protecting Surfers from Misconduct

Effective: November 1, 2026
Owner: Compliance Officer

Section I: OVERVIEW

A. Introduction

USA Surfing is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes' physical, emotional and social development and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct and abuse.

USA Surfing, as a recognized National Governing Body by the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (the "USOPC"), is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the "Center") and subject to the Center's SafeSport Code for the Olympic and Paralympic Movement (the "SafeSport Code"). The Center, the USOPC, and federal legislation all promulgate policies and procedures to safeguard athletes and this policy reinforces those principles by providing specific application for USA Surfing.

The USA Surfing SurfSafe Policy (the "Policy") and the USA Surfing Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (the "MAAPP") work in concert to forward our organization's commitment to the prevention and education efforts aimed at creating an environment free of emotional, physical and sexual misconduct and abuse, and to ensure effective and prompt resolution upon the allegation of misconduct and/or abuse.

This Policy, in addition to other USA Surfing policies, are posted here.

Nothing contained in this Policy is intended to supersede, replace, or otherwise abrogate the USA Surfing Bylaws, the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (the "Act"), or the SafeSport Code.

B. Definitions

The below definitions are applicable to this policy:

- "Act" refers to the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act
- "Adult" means 18 years of age or older.
- "Center" means the U.S. Center for SafeSport.
- "Claimant" means a person who is reported to have experienced conduct that may constitute a SafeSport Code violation.
- "MAAPP" means the USA Surfing Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy.
- "Minor" is an individual who or is, or is believed by the Respondent to be, under the age of 18.
- "Participant" has the meaning set forth in Section C.
- "Policy" as used herein means the USA Surfing SafeSport Policy.

- "Respondent" means a Participant who is alleged to have violated this Policy and/or the SafeSport Code.
- "RSO Policy" refers to the USOPC's Responsible Sport Organization Background Check Policy.
- "SafeSport Code" means the U.S. Center for SafeSport's SafeSport Code for the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.
- "Temporary Measures" has the meaning given to it in Section IV (B) of this Policy.
- "USOPC" means the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee

C. Applicability

C.1. Participant. 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 the individual is seeking to be, currently is, or was at the time of any alleged violation of Prohibited Conduct, a/an:

- Board of Director
- Officer
- Employee
- Standing Committee Member, including Athlete Advisory Council Member
- Advisory Group Member
- Hearing Panel Member
- Adult Individual Member:
    - Athlete - Adult Member
    - Athlete - One Time Adult
    - Private Coach
- Minor Individual Member:
    - Athlete - Minor Member
- Independent Contractor (*authorized, approved, or appointed by USA Surfing to have regular contact with and/or authority over minor athletes and/or have substantial decision-making authority)*:
    - Contractor - Coach
    - Contractor - Judge
    - Contractor - Official
    - Contractor - Medical
    - Contractor – Broadcast

- Volunteer *(officially recognized as such by USA Surfing including, but not limited to*):
    - Volunteer - Coach
    - Volunteer - Medical
    - Volunteer - Chaperone
    - Volunteer - Intern
    - Volunteer - Pusher, Catcher, Visual Guide
    - Volunteer - Other
- Vendors who are authorized, approved, or appointed by USA Surfing to have regular contact with and/or authority over minor athletes
- Any other individual determined by USA Surfing to be a "Participant".

C.2. Dual Jurisdiction. A USA Surfing Participant may also be identified as a USOPC Participant and subject to the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy and other applicable policies of the USOPC. In instances where both USA Surfing and the USOPC have jurisdiction over an allegation of Prohibited Conduct as defined in Section III, USA Surfing will coordinate with the USOPC to determine which organization will exercise jurisdiction for response and resolution.

D. Jurisdiction

D.1. Coverage. For the purposes of this Policy, USA Surfing shall have jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations of Prohibited Conduct (as defined in Section III) that are not within the Center's exclusive jurisdiction and the Center has not exercised discretionary jurisdiction and that are not related to a matter wherein the USOPC asserts jurisdiction.

D.2. Relevant Organizational Policies. Allegations against USA Surfing employees may be also addressed through USA Surfing's employment policies and procedures and may also be addressed under this Policy. In addition, USA Surfing may address violations of this Policy under other relevant organizational policies (e.g. USA Surfing Code of Conduct).

Section II: PREVENTION POLICIES

A. MAAPP. USA Surfing recognizes additional safeguards are paramount to the wellbeing of minors. As such, USA Surfing has formally adopted the mandatory components of the required components of the Centers' Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. All Participants are subject to the USA Surfing Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP).

B. Education and Training. USA Surfing requires that all Adult Participants remain current with the required training outlined in Part II of the MAAPP. This includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:

a. SafeSport Trained Core Course
b. Refresher Training

USA Surfing will offer the following annually in accordance with the MAAPP:

a. Minor Training
b. Parent Training

C. Tracking Requirements. USA Surfing will track all education and training requirements and perform periodic checks to ensure compliance with this Policy.

D. Background Check Policy. In an effort to further foster a safe environment, USA Surfing is subject to the USOPC's NGB Background Check Policy. Accordingly, USA Surfing requires criminal background screening as directed by the USOPC and in accordance with the requirements set forth in the USA Surfing Background Check Policy.

Section III. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Participants are prohibited from engaging in conduct (or failing to report Prohibited Conduct) identified in this section as Prohibited Conduct.

A. Violations of the SafeSport Code. USA Surfing adopts and incorporates herein the definitions of Prohibited Conduct, as defined in the SafeSport Code.

B. Violations of the MAAPP. Participants are prohibited from violating the MAAPP.

C. Violations of USA Surfing's Process. Participants are prohibited from engaging in Prohibited Conduct as it relates to USA Surfing processes; such as, but not limited to, failing to make a required report under this Policy, Retaliation, Aiding and Abetting, Intentionally Filing a False Allegation and Abuse of Process.

Section IV: REPORTING

A. The U.S. 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 Code

B. Reporting Obligations

1. *Mandatory Reporters*. Although USA Surfing strongly encourages all Participants to protect our community by reporting allegations of Prohibited Conduct, Adult Participants are mandatory reporters and 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. Mandatory reporters must comply with any other applicable reporting requirements under state and federal law.

C. Reporting Allegations of Prohibited Conduct

USA Surfing recognizes it can be difficult for an athlete, teammate, co-worker, friend or family member to report an allegation of misconduct and strives to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible. Please recognize the reporter's critical role is simply to report the allegation to the appropriate entity(ies). It is not the reporter's responsibility to evaluate the credibility of the allegation, gather additional information, or investigate the incident. Individuals needing assistance with reporting or having questions about appropriate reporting protocol should contact athletesafety@usasurfing.org.

1. *Sexual Misconduct and Child Abuse*

- ***Report Sexual Misconduct and Child Abuse Immediately to the U.S. Center for SafeSport*** *online at https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern.*

    - *AND -*

- ***Report Child Abuse Immediately to Law Enforcement***

Important: *If an Adult Participant Learns of information and reasonably suspects that a Minor has suffered an incident of Child Abuse (to include neglect, physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse) they must report this to local law enforcement (or in some states child protective services and in compliance with any other applicable reporting obligations under state or federal laws) and the Center immediately.* ***Filing a report with the Center does not satisfy the reporting requirement to law enforcement.***

Note: Individuals reporting to law enforcement are encouraged to request, retain and provide to the Center the applicable case identification number, investigator name and/or contact information, if available.

2. *Report Emotional, Physical and other Prohibited Conduct and MAAPP Violations.*

Promptly report allegations of emotional, physical or other Prohibited Conduct and allegations

of MAAPP violations by providing as much relevant information as possible (e.g. reporting parties name and contact information, alleged misconduct/concern, date of incident, location of incident, individuals involved and their roles, ages and contact information, if known, including potential bystanders/witnesses) and attach any relevant documentation to:

i. Online Submission form (indicate "Athlete Safety) at: https://www.usasurfing.org/dispute-resolution.htmlPhone: 949-391-1010

Important:

- *Nothing precludes an individual from reporting emotional, physical and/or other Prohibited Conduct or violations of the MAAPP to the Center. If doing so for a specific concern such as a conflict of interest, the individual is encouraged to note this on the incident report form. If the Center does not assume jurisdiction, it has a process to route the allegation to the appropriate entity for review, response and resolution.*
- *If an allegation of sexual misconduct or child abuse is received by USA Surfing, the matter will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement or child protective entity and the Center. USA Surfing does not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such an allegation as a condition for reporting to appropriate authorities.*
- *USA Surfing will report an allegation that falls within the Center's exclusive jurisdiction, directly to the Center immediately, but no later than 24 hours.*
- *USA Surfing will respond to requests from the Center within 72 hours regarding the eligibility status of a Participant and the existence of USA Surfing-imposed temporary measures or safety plans.*
- *USA Surfing will request the Center take discretionary jurisdiction in matters it deems prudent to do so.*

3. *Anonymous Reporting*. Reports may be made anonymously. However, it does not mean that the underlying information will be protected. 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. Should you elect to report anonymously, the more information that is included in the report will support the preliminary review and the investigation, if applicable.
4. *Fees*. There is no cost or fee associated with filing a report for any allegation of Prohibited Conduct under this Policy.
5. *Investigation Prior to Reporting*. Participants should not investigate or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of allegations of Prohibited Conduct. Participants making a good faith report are not required to prove the reports are true before reporting to the U.S. Center for SafeSport, USA Surfing or appropriate authorities.
6. *Permissive Reporters*. Any individual may report: observed or suspected violations of this Policy, the Code, the MAAPP, or reasonably suspected allegations of child abuse.
7. *Non-obligated Reporters*. Nothing herein shall be construed to require a victim of child abuse or other misconduct to self-report.
8. *Reporting to Law Enforcement*. Adult Participants must adhere to any other reporting

requirements under federal, state, or local law.

9. *Ongoing reporting obligation*. Adult Participants have an on-going obligation to report any new information that may arise.
10. *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.
11. *Privacy.* When a report is filed with USA Surfing, it will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of all individuals involved while balancing legal or policy requirements or the need to gather information to assess an allegation of misconduct. USA Surfing reserves the right to notify parents/legal guardians of reports and matters involving minors.

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 is warranted, or if it should be dismissed. Dismissal may be warranted if USA Surfing lacks jurisdiction, alleged conduct does not rise to the level of Prohibited Misconduct or is outside the scope of the purview of this Policy or has absolutely no basis. USA Surfing may contact the reporter to clarify the report prior to determining dismissal.

2. *Reporting Party Communication.*

   USA Surfing will promptly inform an identified reporting party of its jurisdictional determination regarding their report to USA Surfing, communicating that the matter is being referred to the Center, is being addressed by USA Surfing, or is being dismissed.

3. *Investigation.*

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

4. *Interference*.

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

Section V: 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 Claimant or vulnerable person, including minors. The

hearing process is outlined in USA Surfing's Complaint Resolution Policy. The Compliance Officer ensures the documented procedure is being followed.

B. Temporary Measures

1. *Definition*. USA Surfing adopts the same terminology for a "Temporary Measure," from the SafeSport 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, or the Center if the Center adopts the Temporary Measure, 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.

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." A Claimant's decision not to participate does not automatically result in a matter being placed on hold. USA Surfing may continue where sufficient independent information or evidence exists.
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.

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[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. The Australian Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. (2017). Final Report.

Section VI: USA SURFING OBLIGATIONS

A. Compliance with the USOPC's NGB Athlete Safety Policy

USA Surfing will comply with the requirements of the USOPC's NGB Athlete Safety Policy, including but not limited to the following provisions:

1. *Notification of Allegations of Prohibited Conduct Occurring Under USOPC's Jurisdiction*. USA Surfing will notify the USOPC's Office of Athlete Safety as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after learning of an allegation of Prohibited Conduct, as defined in the SafeSport Code, 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 Office of Athlete Safety by email to athlete.safety@usopc.org as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours of imposing its own or being notified of a Center-imposed 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's Office of Athlete Safety 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.

B. Compliance with Executive Order 14201–Protecting Opportunities for Women

USA Surfing is committed to protecting opportunities for athletes participating in sport. USA Surfing will continue to collaborate with various stakeholders with oversight responsibilities, e.g. the USOPC, IOC, IPC, ISA, to ensure that women have a fair and safe competition environment consistent with Executive Order 14201 and the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. Section 22501, et. seq.

C. Compliance with the Act–Assistance with Employment Prohibited for Sexual Misconduct Violations and Convictions

As required by Section 220524(a)(12) of the Act, USA Surfing prohibits any Participant who is an employee, contractor, or agent of USA Surfing from assisting a USA Surfing member or former member in obtaining a new job (except for the routine transmission of administrative and personnel files) if the individual knows that the member or former member violated the policies or procedures of the Center related to sexual misconduct or was convicted of a crime involving sexual misconduct with a minor in violation of applicable law or the policies or procedures of the Center.

D. Compliance with the U.S. Center for SafeSport

USA Surfing will demonstrate compliance with child protection laws and the U.S. Center for SafeSport requirements, including the enforcement of sanctions and temporary measures issued by the Center and through the U.S. Center for SafeSport's most recent audit report of USA Surfing.

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

E. Whistleblower Protection.

USA Surfing prohibits retaliation before, during, and after the process (whether led by USA Surfing or the Center) of resolving any allegation of suspected Sexual Misconduct, Physical Misconduct, Emotional Misconduct, or violation of the MAAPP. 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 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 SafeSport Code violation. Allegations of retaliation will be adjudicated according to the USA Surfing Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy and reported to the Center.

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