

# GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT



## BACKGROUND

In 2012, the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements created the SafeSport program to improve athlete safety across the U.S. Olympic Committee's (USOC's) 47 sport National Governing Bodies (NGBs).

Since its adoption, the program has provided education and prevention resources related to:

- Emotional misconduct
- Physical misconduct
- Sexual misconduct
- Bullying
- Hazing
- Harassment

In 2017, the USOC will externalize the SafeSport program with the launch of the U.S. Center for SafeSport – an independent, nonprofit organization.



## LAUNCH, LOCATION & GOVERNANCE

The Center is located in Denver, Colo., and will open in early 2017.

The Center is governed by a nine-member board of directors, which includes subject-matter experts in the areas of abuse prevention and investigation, ethics compliance and sport administration.



## MISSION, PURPOSE & VISION

### Mission

To cultivate and steward a culture of dignity and respect in sport.

### Purpose

Enable every athlete to thrive by fostering a national sport culture of respect and safety, on and off the field of play.





## THE SAFESPORT CODE

The **SafeSport Code** outlines prohibited conduct and applies without regard to age, race or ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or competitive level. There is no statute of limitations on possible violations of the SafeSport Code, and alleged violations need not have occurred in the context of sport.

### Vision

Every athlete is safe, supported and strengthened through sport.

- **Safe.** Athletes are protected from emotional, physical and sexual abuse.
- **Supported.** Athletes enjoy welcome, respectful environments, and diversity is actively embraced.
- **Strengthened.** Athletes use the skills they've learned in sport to contribute to the well-being of their communities.

## SERVICES

### Education and Outreach Office

The Center's Education and Outreach Office will administer national prevention programming, raise issue awareness, and provide resources and training to promote respect and prevent abuse.

- The Center will provide education materials, including talking points, fact sheets, brochures and training materials.
- The Center will centralize best practices, provide self-evaluation tools and offer specialized resources.
- The SafeSport Learning Center will offer sport organizations easy access to educational opportunities for their coaches, staff, volunteers, parents and athletes.



## Response and Resolution Office

The Center's Response & Resolution Office will investigate and resolve alleged policy violations for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements' 47 member National Governing Bodies, including the United States Bowling Congress.

- As a member organization of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USBC has agreed to adhere to the Center's policies and procedures, including the SafeSport Code, which serves as the benchmark by which the Center determines whether or not a policy violation has occurred. These policies and procedures also outline:
  - Center jurisdiction and authority
  - Sanctioning guidelines
  - Reporting and confidentiality
  - Resolution procedures, including investigation and arbitration
- Aggregate data from Center investigations will be used to identify trends and patterns across sport, strengthening national prevention efforts.



### JURISDICTION & AUTHORITY

The Center has disciplinary jurisdiction over all Covered Individual as defined by USBC in its bylaws and Association Policy Manual.

The Center will have the exclusive authority to investigate and resolve alleged SafeSport Code violations involving sexual misconduct. USBC will retain the authority to investigate and resolve alleged SafeSport Code violations that are non-sexual in nature. Although, at USBC's request, the Center may exercise the discretionary authority to take on cases of this nature.

Exclusive Authority	Discretionary Authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sexual harassment</li><li>• Non-consensual sexual contact</li><li>• Non-consensual sexual acts</li><li>• Sexual contact or acts involving minors</li><li>• Sexual exploitation</li><li>• Romantic or sexual relationships involving an imbalance of power</li><li>• Criminal activity involving sexual acts or contact</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical misconduct</li><li>• Emotional misconduct</li><li>• Bullying</li><li>• Hazing</li><li>• Harassment</li></ul>



## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFESPORT CODE VIOLATIONS

All individuals, regardless of membership with USBC, are encouraged to report suspected violations of the SafeSport Code. Covered Individuals who are over the age of 18 are required to report suspected SafeSport Code violations related to or accompanying sexual misconduct. Covered Individuals who fail to report SafeSport Code violations may be subject to disciplinary action.

### How to Report

Individuals may report suspected SafeSport Code violations directly to the Center as well as to USBC.

Visit [BOWL.com/SafeSport](https://www.bowl.com/SafeSport) and click on the USBC and SafeSport tab for reporting procedures.

### Confidentiality

Although the Center cannot guarantee confidentiality, it will, to the greatest extent possible, maintain the privacy of all individuals involved in the investigation and resolution of alleged SafeSport Code violations.

### Anonymous Reporting

Anonymous reporting is permitted.

### Legally Mandated Reporting

Reporting alleged criminal conduct to USBC or the Center may not satisfy individual mandatory reporting requirements under state or federal law. Click [here](#) to view state-by-state mandatory reporting laws to determine your reporting obligations and options.





## THE INVESTIGATION & RESOLUTION PROCESS

In response to a report of an alleged SafeSport Code violation, the Center may:

- Initiate an informal inquiry into the matter
- Move directly to a full investigation
- Conclude the alleged violation is out of scope and refer the matter to USBC or the U.S. Olympic Committee to determine if a rules violation has occurred



### Informal Inquiry

The Center may conduct an informal inquiry to collect preliminary facts to determine if the matter should be resolved informally, investigated further or not investigated at this time. Informal resolution may be sought only in cases in which the alleged violation is nonviolent in nature.

### Full Investigation

At the start of a full investigation, the Center will provide notice to both involved parties. Each will be given the opportunity to present supporting evidence and provide contact information for potential witnesses.

### Investigator's Report

After reviewing the evidence in the case and interviewing relevant witnesses, an investigator will prepare a written report detailing:

- The facts of the case based on the available evidence
- Whether or not, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the investigator believes a violation has occurred
- Recommended sanctions, if any

The investigator's report will be circulated to both involved parties for comment before the director's decision is rendered.

### Director's Decision

The Center's director of investigations will consider the investigator's report, arguments submitted by the involved parties, and any new information or evidence produced before issuing a final determination. This final determination will be provided in writing to both parties.

### ARBITRATION

Upon receipt of the director's final determination, the parties will have 10 days to request an arbitration hearing before the American Arbitration Association (AAA) to appeal the decision. Parties may challenge the Center's finding and/or any recommended sanctions.

### The Arbitration Process

Arbitrations will be completed, whenever possible, within 20 business days of a pre-hearing conference to discuss the preliminary elements of the case, including scheduling and logistics related to the full hearing.

Hearings may be conducted telephonically, by videoconference or in-person at a location determined by the arbitrator(s).

At the conclusion of a hearing, the arbitrator(s) will render a written, signed final decision, which will uphold the Center's determination or grant the remedy or relief deemed appropriate.

This decision will be final and binding.





## THE DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

The disciplinary process is designed to protect all USBC athletes, members and participants from future misconduct. With this in mind, all recommended sanctions will be reasonable and proportionate to the violation committed and will emphasize education to ensure that minor misconduct does not escalate into a major violation.



### Imposing Sanctions

In response to the Center's determination that a SafeSport Code violation has occurred, USBC will impose any sanctions recommended by the Center. Potential sanctions include, among others, any combination of the following:

- Warning
- Loss of privileges
- Behavioral requirements
- Educational programming
- Probation
- Eligibility or participation restrictions

In determining appropriate sanctions, the Center will consider a range of factors, including but not limited to:

- The seriousness of the violation
- The ages of the individuals involved
- Whether or not the alleged policy violator poses an ongoing threat to the safety of others

### Uniformity Across the Olympic Movement

Participation restrictions imposed by a USOC-member NGB will be upheld across the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements.