



Safe Sport Program / Appeals / Background Screens

July 2024

Overview

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About Safe Sport

USA Hockey is subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport to help create a safer environment for athletes to thrive

- **SafeSport Code**

- **Primarily covers prohibited conduct**
- **Center for SafeSport's response and resolution process**

- **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP)**

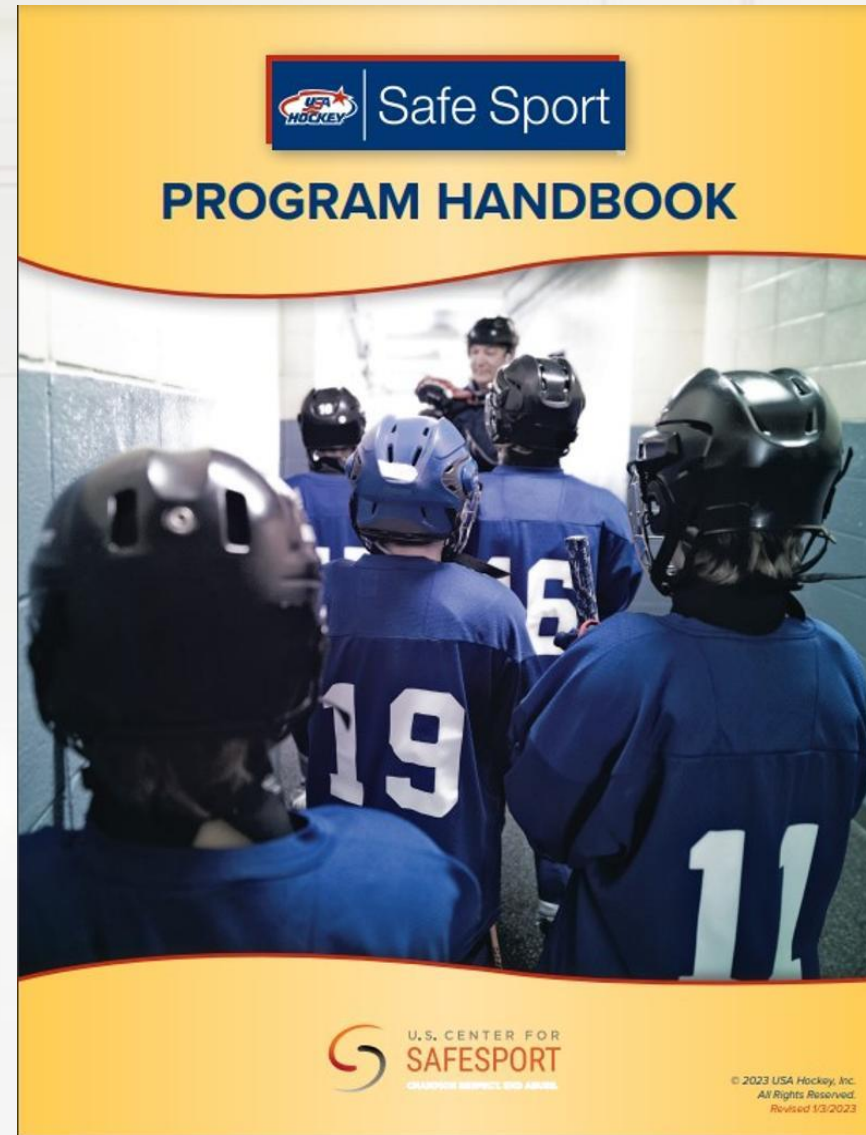
- **Training requirements and preventative policies for prohibited 1-on-1 interaction**
 - **Locker room**
 - **Team travel**
 - **Electronic communications**



About Safe Sport

The SafeSport Code and MAAPP requirements are set forth in USA Hockey's SafeSport Handbook

- Updated on January 3, 2023
- Available for download on USA Hockey and MAHA websites



Reporting Requirements

REPORTS TO U.S. CENTER FOR SAFE SPORT

The Center has exclusive jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations of **Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct**

- *If an Adult Participant reasonably suspects that an incident(s) of Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct has occurred, they must IMMEDIATELY report the incident(s) to the Center as well as applicable law enforcement authorities.*
 - ONLINE: www.uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern
 - PHONE: (833) 587-7233

- **Questions/Concerns? Contact Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator - Jason Reynolds**
 - EMAIL: jreynolds@maha.org
 - CELL: (734) 748-3707



Reporting Requirements

REPORTS TO USA HOCKEY

Reports of any allegation of misconduct or other inappropriate behavior that may violate Safe Sport Policies, other than Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct, should be made immediately to USA Hockey or the Affiliate (Michigan) Safe Sport Coordinator (reports may also be made to the Center).

- **Reports can be made by:**
 - **ONLINE: www.usahockey.com/makingareport**
 - **USAH E-MAIL: usahockeysafesport@usahockey.org**
 - **MAHA: Jason Reynolds – Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator**
 - **E-MAIL:** jreynolds@maha.org
 - **PHONE:** (734) 748-3707



Participant Training Requirements

All coaches, officials, and adult volunteers are now required to renew SafeSport Training within 12 months of the prior training

- **May require certification renewal during the season**
- **Participants may become ineligible during the season, unless new training is completed**
- **Participants should receive frequent e-mail alerts, notifying that training renewal is due**



2023-24 Review

Michigan received 105 SafeSport reports during the 2023-24 season

- **Michigan was ranked #2 among USA Hockey Affiliates for highest number of cases**
- **Does not include reports referred to associations**
 - **Code of Conduct violations (MAHA or USA Hockey)**
 - **Playing Rules violations**
- **Notable increase in cases involving locker room violations**
 - **USA Hockey is reviewing options for more stringent policies**
 - **USAH affiliates are allowed to institute stricter standards than USAH**
 - **Minnesota examples**



Investigations

- **All SafeSport cases*** should be filtered to Michigan SafeSport Coordinator
 - ***Sexual Misconduct / Child Abuse should be immediately reported to the Center for SafeSport**
 - SafeSport cases should **not** be resolved at local association or district level
- **Association Safe Sport liaisons should proceed with:**
 - Answer local participants with questions regarding the Safe Sport reporting process
 - Provide support to participants with reporting, or refer incident reports directly to Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator
 - Receive and log completed decisions on behalf of local associations
 - Report number of open and/or pending cases within local association to its Board of Directors



Investigation & Outcomes

- **Affiliate Safe Sport Coordinator will serve as the primary point of contact for entire investigation**
 - **Manage expectations regarding timeline and potential outcomes**
 - **Conduct and document all fact-finding**
 - **Provide status update(s) to claimant, as necessary**
 - **Facilitate hearings, when applicable**
- **Notifications on investigations and final outcomes will be provided to:**
 - **District Chair**
 - **Respondent's Local Association (President, Safe Sport Liaison)**
 - **Reporting Party / Respondent**



Investigative Timeline

Safe Sport Case Completion (target 30-day completion)

- **WEEK 1: Establish contact with reporting party, review expectations for investigation**
- **WEEKS 2 & 3: Conduct investigation – interviews, documentation, video**
- **WEEK 4: Schedule and complete hearing (if applicable)**
 - Conclusion delivered to all parties within 48 hours
 - **NOTE: Hearing schedule may require exceeding 30 days, but should be no later than 45 days for completion**

Key Considerations:

- Nature of Offense
- Parties / Witnesses
 - Availability
 - Willingness to Participate
 - Number of witnesses
- Time of Season



Appeals Process

Any person that has been suspended after a hearing may appeal the suspension by following the steps below:

- **Statement of Appeal – Must be sent to VP Appeals**
 - Must be sent to VP of Appeals, as well as the District or Board Chair that issued the suspension
 - Statement must be received within 14 days of suspension
 - Statement must specifically address why the suspension should be overturned

- **Suspension Remains During Appeals Process**

- **Appeals Committee**
 - May hold a hearing, or consider the written statement of appeal
 - Must make every reasonable effort to render a decision within a 14-day period
 - Committee may affirm, reverse or modify (increase or decrease) any suspension as deemed proper
 - No further appeals, other than noted in USAH Bylaw 10E(1)a



Updates for 2024-25 Season

MAHA Letter of Admonishment

- **New tool for resolving and/or closing open SafeSport cases**
- **Utilized when reported allegations cannot be elevated to a disciplinary hearing**
 - **Lack of witness corroboration**
 - **Insufficient information**
- **Serves as reminder of participant's obligation to adhere to SafeSport policies**
- **Cases are closed with no further action taken**
 - **May be re-opened for further inquiry if new information is provided to MAHA, USA Hockey, or the U.S. Center for SafeSport**
- **Record maintained by MAHA**



Updates for 2024-25 Season

Notices of Administrative Closure – U.S. Center for SafeSport

- **The U.S. Center for SafeSport has established defining sub-categories to explain the nature of an Administrative Closure**

- **NO APPLICABLE POLICY**
 - **Alleged misconduct, even if true, would not rise to the level of a violation of the Code**
 - **No applicable NGB policy at the time the alleged misconduct occurred**

- **PREVIOUSLY ADJUDICATED**
 - **Specific allegations reported are confirmed to have been formally resolved by the USPOC, NGB or LAO**
 - **No new information materially changing the circumstances of the previous adjudication available**

- **ADMONISHMENT**
 - **Alleged misconduct is best addressed with Respondent in educational conversation, followed by a Letter of Admonishment**
 - **Reports of similar behavior, following delivery of the Letter of Admonishment, may result in a new case**
 - **Letter of Admonishment may be used as an aggravator in a subsequent case**



Updates for 2024-25 Season

- **DECEASED RESPONDENT**

- **Case will be Administratively Closed once it is confirmed that the Respondent is deceased**

- **UNSUPPORTED ALLEGATIONS**

- **Reported Claimant(s) deny that they have experienced misconduct**
- **No corroborative evidence to support allegations**
- **Most cases of this nature are related to Third-Party reports**



Updates for 2024-25 Season

Notices of Administrative Hold – U.S. Center for SafeSport

- **The U.S. Center for SafeSport may place an open case on an Administrative Hold based on two primary categories:**

- **INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION**
 - **Unable to proceed with or continue a formal investigation regarding an allegation**
 - **Lack of party and/or relevant documentary evidence impedes a full assessment of the allegations**
 - **May also include cases in which Claimant has declined to participate in process, or is non-responsive**

- **UNIDENTIFIED CLAIMANT**
 - **Report alleges misconduct but does not specify the Claimant**
 - **Center has exhausted all means to obtain information and Claimant remains unidentified**



Updates for 2024-25 Season

Important Notes for 2024-25...

- **Please reinforce locker room policies with your coaches / administrators at the start of the season**
- **Please encourage participants alleging potential SafeSport violations to file a report as soon as possible – in REAL TIME!**
- **Please reiterate the importance of confidentiality with those in receipt of allegations of potential violations – do not feed the ‘court of public opinion’**
- **Please encourage anyone with reservations about filing a SafeSport report to contact the Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator (Michigan) immediately for support**
- **Please promote a ‘report-friendly’ environment within your community**



Background Screening

USA Hockey National Screening Program

- Led by National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI)
- Requires that all USA Hockey coaches, officials and volunteers over the age of 18 must successfully complete criminal background screening
 - *Individuals who have not completed the criminal background screening do not meet the eligibility requirements to participate in USA Hockey*

IMPORTANT! Complete your background screen ASAP!



Questions?

