

USA FENCING SAFESPORT HANDBOOK

April 15, 2019 Update

As a member National Governing Body of the United States Olympic Committee (“USOC”), and pursuant to federal law, USA Fencing is required to adhere to the rules and regulations of the USOC and of the U.S. Center for Safe Sport (the “Center”), which has promulgated its “SafeSport Code for the US Olympic and Paralympic Movement” (the “Code”). Pursuant to USA Fencing’s Bylaws as amended effective July 31, 2017, the Code superseded and replaced the USA Fencing SafeSport Policy.

Effective April 15, 2019, the U.S. Center for SafeSport issued a revised Code, which can be found [here](#) and supersedes and replaces previous versions of the Code.

June 3, 2019 Update

Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy replaces Proactive Policies

Dec 31, 2019
Updates to BGS

April 15, 2021
Move Disciplinary Proceedings to Athlete Handbook

November 1, 2021
Updated Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies

Effective January 1, 2019

The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement is committed to creating and maintaining a sport community where all persons who participate in sport programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of misconduct. As a member National Governing Body of the United States Olympic Committee (“USOC”), and pursuant to federal law, USA Fencing is required to adhere to the rules and regulations of the USOC and of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the “Center”), which has promulgated its “SafeSport Code for the US Olympic and Paralympic Movement” (the “Code”). Pursuant to USA Fencing’s Bylaws as amended effective July 31, 2017, the Code superseded and replaced the USA Fencing SafeSport Policy, which has been amended and restated as set forth herein (the “Handbook”). This handbook includes additional SafeSport related policies, procedures and requirements that are important to creating and maintaining a SafeSport environment. USA Fencing 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. USA Fencing is committed to improving the development and safety of athletes and participants involved in sport.

I. WHAT TO REPORT, AND TO WHOM

Every Adult Participant *shall* report:

1. Observed violations of this Policy, the Code and the MAAPP.
2. Observations or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse.

Every constituent *may* report: suspected violations of this Policy or the Code,

A. Sexual misconduct

1. Conduct by an Adult Participant that could constitute sexual misconduct must be reported to the Center as set forth in the *SafeSport Practices and Procedures for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement* (Appendix A to the Code). USA Fencing will also accept reports of Sexual Misconduct and pass them along to the Center.
2. If an allegation involves child abuse or neglect, the matter must also be referred to the appropriate legal authorities.

B. Other misconduct

1. Emotional and Physical Misconduct

Conduct by a Adult Participant that could constitute Emotional or Physical Misconduct under this Policy, including Bullying Behaviors, Hazing and Harassment, should be reported to USA Fencing.

2. Proactive Policies

Conduct by an Adult Participant that could violate a proactive policy should be reported to USA Fencing,

C. Retaliation

1. Sexual misconduct

Retaliation related to an allegation of sexual misconduct should be reported to the Center. If reported to USA Fencing, then USA Fencing shall report the alleged retaliation to the Center.

2. Other misconduct

Retaliation related to an allegation of other misconduct— Emotional Misconduct, Physical Misconduct, Bullying Behaviors, Hazing, Harassment or proactive policies as contained in the MAAPP— should be reported to USA Fencing.

PLEASE REFER TO ATHLETE HANDBOOK CH 13 FOR DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS – LINK

HERE

II. USA FENCING SCREENING AND BACKGROUND CHECK PROGRAM

A. Screening and Background Check Program

The purposes of USA Fencing's Background Check Program are as follows:

- Protect USA Fencing athletes and participants from known offenders so that such known offenders do not have access to USA Fencing members in connection with USA Fencing sanctioned events or activities.
- Deter offenders that have not been caught from joining USA Fencing programs.
- Protect USA Fencing's reputation as a sport where participants are protected against abuse.
- Help protect USA Fencing, USA Fencing Clubs and their respective employees and volunteers from liability that could arise from allowing a previous offender to have access to athletes and participants.

1. USA Fencing Screening Policies

USA Fencing's policy includes set criteria for which a person may be disqualified and prohibited from serving as an employee or volunteer of USA Fencing or USA Fencing Clubs. Under the policy, USA Fencing will not authorize or sanction any employee or volunteer who has routine access to athletes and participants unless that person consents to be screened and passes a criminal background screen conducted by USA Fencing through the Coach, +Coach upgrade or +CheckEd upgrade Member programs.

USA Fencing shall conduct screening of its employees, member volunteers and independent contractors as follows:

- All members of the USA Fencing Board of Directors, each member of a USA Fencing committee/task force and division officers shall be screened through the Coach, +Coach upgrade or +CheckEd upgrade Member programs upon their election or appointment to the position and then shall be re-screened every two (2) years. This includes a Supplement background check after one year.
- All USA Fencing employees shall be screened as a condition of their employment and then shall be re-screened every two (2) years. This includes a Supplement background check after one year.
- All coaches, instructors and other staff for any USA Fencing National Team event shall be screened as a condition of being selected for such position or shall have been screened by USA Fencing within the past two (2) years.
- All individuals who are acting as coaches or instructors of athletes or participants at USA Fencing clubs, their events or activities, or at USA Fencing sanctioned events or activities, shall be screened through the Coach Member, or +Coach upgrade, Member programs.
- All persons acting as officials or administrative personnel at USA Fencing sanctioned events shall be screened through the Coach, +Coach or +CheckEd upgrade Member programs.
- All volunteers at USA Fencing sanctioned events who will have frequent contact with athletes and participants shall be screened through the Coach, +Coach upgrade or +CheckEd upgrade Member programs program.

2. USA Fencing Club Screening Policies

As a condition of its affiliation with USA Fencing, each Member and Affiliate Club must be in compliance with the

requirements set forth below:

All Club employees and independent contractors, including but not limited to coaches and instructors, must be USA Fencing Coach, +Coach upgrade or +CheckEd upgrade prior to such individuals having access to athletes and participants

In addition, all Club owners, directors, managers, and program administrators, and all other affiliated persons having frequent contact with athletes or participants at the Club or its events or activities, must be USA Fencing Coach, +Coach upgrade or +CheckEd upgrade.

An approved screen of Club personnel through those programs shall be valid for two years. All previously screened persons must complete a new background screen every two (2) years. This includes a Supplement background check after one year.

3. Search Criteria

- a) Social Security Number validation;
- b) Name and address history records;
- c) Two independent Multi-Jurisdictional Criminal Database searches covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
- d) Federal District Courts search for each name used and district where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past seven years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable;
- e) County Criminal Records for each name used and county where the individual currently lives or has lived during the past seven years, going back the length of time records are available and reportable for each county searched;
- f) National Sex Offender Registry database search of all available states, plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico;
- g) Multiple National Watch Lists;
- h) SafeSport Disciplinary Records;
- i) Comprehensive International Records search U.S. citizens who have lived outside of the United States for six consecutive months in any one country, during the past seven years;
- j) Motor Vehicle Records of at least a 3-year history in the state of licensure; (if driving is required for position).

4. Supplemental Background Checks. All supplemental off-year background check screens will be conducted using at least the following search components:

- a) Multi-Jurisdictional criminal database covering 50 states plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico
- b) Sex Offender Registry database searches of all available states, plus DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico; and
- c) SafeSport Disciplinary Records.

5. USA Fencing Criminal Background Check Disqualification Criteria

Any background check that results in a report of a disposition or resolution of a criminal proceeding, other than an adjudication of not guilty, for any of the below criminal offenses will be issued a red light determination:

- a. Any felony (any crime punishable by confinement greater than one year)

- b. Any misdemeanor involving:
- i. All sexual crimes, criminal offenses or a sexual nature to include but not limited to; rape, child molestation, sexual battery, lewd conduct, possession and distribution of child pornography, possession and distribution of obscene material, prostitution, indecent exposure, public indecency, and any sex offender registrant (any participant that has been convicted of, received an imposition of a deferred sentence for, or any plea of guilty or no contest for any sexual crime, criminal offense of a sexual nature, and/or sex offender registrant must be reported);
 - ii. Any drug related offenses;
 - iii. Harm to a minor and vulnerable person, including, but not limited to, offenses such as child abandonment, child endangerment/neglect/abuse, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and DUI with a minor;
 - iv. Violence against a person (including crimes involving firearms and domestic violence);
 - v. Stalking, harassment, blackmail, violation of a protection order and/or threats;
 - vi. Destruction of property, including arson, vandalism, and criminal mischief; and
 - vii. Animal abuse or neglect.

Secondary Review of Responsible Sport Organization Determinations: USA Fencing will comply with the USOPC Background Check Policy and Procedures as it relates to situations under which a secondary review of USA Fencing's determination will be conducted by the USOPC. ([USOPC BG Policy](#) and [USOPC BG Procedures](#))

6. USA Fencing Background Check Appeal Procedures

All appeals of "red light" or "adverse action letter" background checks shall be referred to the SafeSport Coordinator (SSC) for initial evaluation, and when appropriate, for further action in accordance with USA Fencing policies and procedures. In the discharge of these duties, the SSC shall consult with the Chief Executive Officer and USAF legal counsel as he or she deems appropriate. If the SSC is the subject of the complaint, the President shall serve the functions assigned by this policy to the SSC.

Any member of the USAF or applicant for USAF membership who is denied admission or appointment to any position on the basis of a "red light" background check or an "adverse action letter" predicated on the results of a background check shall have a right to seek review of that decision in accordance with the procedures here specified.

1. Should any individual receive a "red light" finding or an "adverse action letter" based on a USAF required background check and wish to contest any resulting USAF decision to deny his or her application for membership or to deny him or her any USAF position or appointment, that individual has a right to a review of the denial. The person who seeks review is referred to herein as "the appellant." The appellant may act on his or her own behalf during the appeal or may be assisted by a representative.
2. Unless otherwise notified by the USAF that a shorter period is required because of nomination deadlines dictated by the USAF, the USOC, the FIE or by prevailing circumstances, the

appellant shall have 10 business days from the date that he or she is informed of the decision from which the appeal is being taken to notify the Safe Sport Coordinator of the appeal.

3. The SSC shall review any evidence and argument submitted by the appellant or on his or her behalf and shall undertake such additional investigation as the SSC believes necessary to make an initial determination of the merits of the appeal. Upon reaching that determination, the SSC may inform the appellant thereof and shall ascertain from the appellant whether he or she wishes to proceed to a hearing by the Board of Directors.
4. If the appellant wishes to proceed, and the Board has previously provided for the hearing of background check appeals by a committee of the Board, and has constituted and populated such a committee, the SSC shall refer the matter to that committee and shall forward to them, his/her file in the matter, including (a) all statements, documents and other evidence obtained by him, including the background check findings; (b) the arguments and evidence submitted by the appellant or on his behalf, and (c) the SSC's recommendation whether the decision being appealed should be upheld or overruled and the reasons underlying that recommendation. If the committee is not in place, the matter will be referred directly to the Board of Directors at the next scheduled meeting.
5. The designated committee shall review the file. The decision shall be reversed if a majority of the members of the Board (or of the designated committee) present and voting concludes either (a) by a preponderance of the evidence that the background check results were based on erroneous information; or (b) that to a reasonable degree of certainty the applicant does not pose a danger to the individuals with whom he or she is expected to come into contact by virtue of the class of membership, the position or the appointment that was denied on the basis of the "red light" or "adverse action letter." If the designated committee is not unanimous in their ruling, the review will be done by the USA Fencing Board of Directors.
6. The SSC shall communicate the results of the appeal to the appellant with copies to the CEO, legal counsel and any other person or organization necessary to effect any change in the appellant's status resulting from the decision on appeal.
7. If the appellant disagrees with the outcome of the appeal, he or she may file a demand for arbitration with the American Arbitration Association as provided in the Bylaws. The award obtained in the arbitration shall be final and binding on all parties.
8. The intentional submission of false information or evidence in connection with any proceeding provided herein shall be grounds for disciplinary action in accordance with USAF disciplinary procedures.

III. USA Fencing and U.S. Center for SafeSport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) is committed to building a sport community where Participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct. Throughout this document the most commonly used terms are defined in the Terminology section in the back of this document.

Authority

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 authorizes the Center to develop training and policies to prevent abuse—including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse—within the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(1). Federal law requires that, at a minimum, national governing bodies and paralympic sports organizations *must offer and give consistent training related to the prevention of child abuse: (1) to all adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors and (2) subject to parental consent, to members who are minors.* 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2)(E). Federal law requires that these policies contain reasonable procedures to limit unobservable and uninterrupted one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete, who is a minor, and an adult, who is not the minor’s legal guardian, at facilities under the jurisdiction of organizations within the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Movement. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2)(C).

What is the MAAPP?

To that end, the Center has developed the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP). 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.

The Center developed the MAAPP to assist National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Paralympic Sport Organizations (PSOs), Local Affiliated Organizations (LAOs), the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), and other individuals to whom these policies apply in meeting their obligations under federal law (*note: implementing these policies does not guarantee that an organization or individual fully complies with federal law or all applicable legal obligations*). These Organizations should share these policies with all Participants and with parents/guardians of minor athletes. Those implementing these policies should consider the physical and cognitive needs of all athletes.

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. **The Center recommends that parents first complete training on abuse prevention to be informed about potential boundary violations and concerns before consenting to the interaction.**

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 [SafeSport Code](#). Additionally, other resources are available that may assist organizations in improving athlete safety¹.

How Does the Center Ensure Compliance with the MAAPP?

Federal law requires the Center to conduct regular and random audits of the NGBs to ensure compliance with these policies. 36 U.S.C. § 220542(a)(2)(E). More specific organizational compliance requirements can be found in the Appendix. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the USOPC and each NGB, LAO, and Adult Participant to comply with the MAAPP. The aforementioned Organizations can act in their respective programs for violations of the MAAPP by Adult Participants. Adult Participants also have an independent responsibility to comply with these MAAPP provisions. Violations of these provisions can result in sanctions under the SafeSport Code.

Is the MAAPP Different from the SafeSport Code?

Yes. The [SafeSport Code](#) works alongside the MAAPP to prevent abuse. The MAAPP includes proactive prevention policies for organizations and individuals, while the SafeSport Code contains misconduct policies for individuals. However, violations of the MAAPP can violate the SafeSport Code, and violators can be sanctioned.

SCOPE

The MAAPP Applies to “In-Program Contact” Within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement

The MAAPP is required for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), National Governing Bodies (NGB), Local Affiliated Organizations (LAO), and Paralympic Sport Organizations (PSO) within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement (each an “Organization”).

Some policies impose requirements on USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs at sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under USA Fencing’s jurisdiction. For example, USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs, as the case may be, must monitor locker rooms at their respective facilities and sanctioned events. Other policies impose certain requirements on Adult Participants under USA Fencing’s

¹ Saul, J., & Audage, N.C. (2007). [Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-Servicing Organization: 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](#).

jurisdiction when the Adult Participant is having “In-Program Contact.” For example, Adult Participants cannot have one-on-one electronic communications with Minor Athletes that they coach.

Who is a Minor Athlete?

A **Minor Athlete** is an amateur athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or partially or fully under the jurisdiction of, USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs

Partial or Full Jurisdiction: Includes any sanctioned event or activity (including all travel and lodging in connection therewith) conducted by the USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs, and any facility that USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs owns, leases, or rents for practice, training, or competition.

Who is an Adult Participant?

An **Adult Participant** is any adult (18 years of age or older) who is:

1. A member or license holder of USA Fencing
2. An employee or board member of USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs
3. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Fencing
4. Authorized, approved, or appointed by an USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs to have regular contact with or authority over Minor Athletes.²

What is In-Program Contact?

In-Program Contact includes sanctioned events and facilities, but it also applies more broadly to sport-related interactions. **The MAAPP defines “In-Program Contact” as:**

Any contact (including communications, interactions, or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport.

Examples of in-program contact include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post game meals or outings, team travel, review of game film, team- or sport-related relationship building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community service, sport education, or competition site visits.

Does the MAAPP Have Any Exceptions?

Yes. The MAAPP was written with certain appropriate exceptions in mind. Exceptions are addressed in each policy and include:

1. A Close-in-Age Exception

This exception applies to certain policies and allows for In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and

² This may include volunteers, medical staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, officials, adult athletes, staff, board members, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition.

a Minor Athlete if:

- a. The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete; and
- b. The Adult Participant is not more than four years older than the Minor Athlete.

Note: This exception is different than the close-in-age exception in the [SafeSport Code](#) pertaining to misconduct.

2. Exceptions for Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants Working with a Minor Athlete

3. Exceptions for Dual Relationships

This exception applies to certain policies when the Adult Participant has a dual role or relationship with a Minor Athlete. The exception requires written consent of the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian at least annually.

Many of the exceptions require parent/guardian consent. The Center recommends parents take training on child abuse prevention before providing consent under these policies. The Center offers a free Parent Course at www.athletesafety.org.

Am I required to take SafeSport Training?

Certain Adult Participants within the Olympic & Paralympic Movement who have (i) regular contact with Minor Athletes, (ii) authority over Minor Athletes, or (iii) are employees or board members of the USOPC, NGBs, PSOs, or LAOs, are required to take training. The specific training requirements can be found in Part I.

**PART I
EDUCATION & TRAINING POLICY**

A. Mandatory Child Abuse Prevention Training for Adult Participants

1. Adult Participants Required to Complete Training

- a. The following Adult Participants must complete the *SafeSport Trained Core* either through the Center's online training or the Center's approved, in-person training:
 - i. Adult Participants who have regular contact with any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor;
 - ii. Adult Participants who have authority over any amateur athlete(s) who is a minor;
 - iii. Adult Participants who are an employee or board member of USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs
- b. Adult Participants who are medical providers required to take training under Section (a) can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the *SafeSport Trained Core*. This includes designated medical providers at USA Fencing National Events and designate providers for USA Fencing National Team travel.

2. Timing of Training

Adult Participants must complete this training:

- a. Before regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor begins; **and**
- b. Within the first 45 days of either initial membership or upon beginning a new role subjecting the adult to this policy.

3. Refresher Training

The above listed Adult Participants must complete a refresher course on an annual basis, beginning the calendar year after completing the *SafeSport Trained Core*. Every four years, Adult Participants will complete the *SafeSport Trained Core* training. Medical providers can take the Health Professionals Course in lieu of the *SafeSport Trained Core* and are required to take the refresher courses on an annual basis if they meet the criteria for A(1).

B. Minor Athlete Training Must Be Offered

1. USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs, must on an annual basis offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to Minor Athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
2. The Center offers youth courses, located at www.athletesafety.org, that meet this requirement.

C. Parent Training Must Be Offered

1. USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs must on an annual basis offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
2. The Center offers a parent course, located at www.athletesafety.org, that meets this requirement.

D. Optional Training

1. Adult Participants serving in a volunteer capacity, who will not have regular contact with or authority over Minor Athletes, should take the Center's brief Volunteer Course (or *SafeSport Trained Core*) before engaging or interacting with any Minor Athlete(s).
2. USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs may provide training *in addition to* the *SafeSport Trained Core*, although they cannot refer to this training as "SafeSport" training. **Training other than the *SafeSport Trained Core* or Refresher does not satisfy this policy.**
3. Parents of Minor Athletes are provided free online access to the Center's parent course and are encouraged to take the training.

E. Exemptions and Accommodations

1. Exemptions from this Education & Training Policy may be made on a case-by-case basis for victims/survivors. Requests may be made directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport at exemptions@safesport.org.
2. The Center will work with USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs on appropriate accommodations for persons with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency to satisfy these training requirements. Each NGB, PSO, LAO and the USOPC must provide reasonable accommodations and track any exemptions for individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency.

PART II

REQUIRED POLICIES FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

The U.S. Center for SafeSport recognizes that youth-adult relationships can be healthy and valuable for development. Policies on one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships. As child sexual abuse is often perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations, it is critical that organizations limit such interactions between youth and adults and implement programs that reduce the risk of sexual abuse.

MODEL POLICY: ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

A. Mandatory Components

1. Observable and Interruptible
 - a. All one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible, except in emergency circumstances.
 - b. The exceptions below may apply to specific policies, and if the exceptions apply, they are listed in the policy. These exceptions also apply to all one-on-one In-Program Contact not specifically addressed in other policies:
 - i. When a Dual Relationship exists; or
 - ii. When the Close-in-Age Exception applies; or
 - iii. If a Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant, and:
 - (1) the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent to USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
 - (2) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - (3) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with USA Fencing's Background check policy; or
 - iv. In other circumstances specifically addressed in this policy that allow for certain one-on-one interactions if USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, receives parent/ guardian consent.

MODEL POLICY: MEETINGS AND TRAINING SESSIONS

A. Mandatory Components

1. Observable and Interruptible

Adult Participants must follow the one-on-one interaction policy in all meetings and training sessions where Minor Athlete(s) are present.
2. Individual Training Sessions
 - a. One-on-one, In-Program, individual training sessions must be observable and interruptible except if:
 - i. A Dual Relationship exists; or

- ii. The Close-in-Age Exception applies; or
 - iii. A Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant, and:
 - (1) the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian has provided written consent to USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
 - (2) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - (3) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with USA Fencing’s Background check policy.
 - b. The Adult Participant providing the individual training session must receive advance, written consent from the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian at least annually, which can be withdrawn at any time; and
 - c. Parents/guardians must be allowed to observe the individual training session.
3. Meetings with licensed mental health care professionals and health care providers (other than athletic trainers³)
- If a licensed mental health care professional or licensed health care provider meets one-on-one with a Minor Athlete at a sanctioned event or a facility, which is conducted, operated or maintained by USA Fencing’s or one of its divisions or member clubs, then the meeting must be observable and interruptible except:
- a. If the door remains unlocked; and
 - b. Another adult is present at the facility and notified that a meeting is occurring, although the Minor Athlete’s identity needs not be disclosed; and
 - c. USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, is notified that the provider will be meeting with a Minor Athlete; and
 - d. The provider obtains consent consistent with applicable laws and ethical standards, which can be withdrawn at any time.

MODEL POLICY: ATHLETIC TRAINING MODALITIES, MASSAGES, AND RUBDOWNS

A. Mandatory Components

1. Athletic training modality, massage, or rubdown

All In-Program athletic training modalities, massages, or rubdowns of a Minor Athlete must:

- a. Be observable and interruptible; and
- b. Have another Adult Participant physically present for the athletic training modality, massage, or rubdown; and
- c. Have documented consent as explained in subsection (2) below; and
- d. Be performed with the Minor Athlete fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals are always covered; and
- e. Allow parents/guardians in the room as an observer, except for competition or training venues that limit credentialing.

³ Athletic trainers who are covered under these policies must follow the “Athletic Training Modalities, Massages, and Rubdowns” policy.

2. Consent

- a. Providers of athletic training modalities, massages, and rubdowns for USA Fencing or any its divisions or member clubs, or the USOPC, must, when applicable, obtain consent at least annually from Minor Athletes' parents/guardians before providing any athletic training modalities, massages, or rubdowns.
- b. Minor Athletes or their parents/guardians can withdraw consent at any time.

B. Recommended

Only licensed providers should administer a massage, rubdown, or athletic training modality.

MODEL POLICY: LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

A. Mandatory Components

1. Observable and Interruptible

Adult Participants must ensure that all one-on-one In-Program Contact with Minor Athlete(s) in a locker room, changing area, or similar space where Minor Athlete(s) are present is observable and interruptible, except if:

- a. A Dual Relationship exists; or
- b. The Close-in-Age Exception applies; or
- c. A Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant and:
 - i. the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent to USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
 - ii. the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - iii. the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with USA Fencing's Background check policy.

2. Conduct in Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces

- a. No Adult Participant or Minor Athlete can use the photographic or recording capabilities of any device in locker rooms, changing areas, or any other area designated as a place for changing clothes or undressing.
- b. Adult Participants must not change clothes or behave in a manner that intentionally or recklessly exposes their breasts, buttocks, groins, or genitals to a Minor Athlete.
- c. Adult Participants must not shower with Minor Athletes unless:
 - i. The Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age Exception; or
 - ii. The shower is part of a pre- or post-activity rinse while wearing swimwear.
- d. Parents/guardians may request in writing that their Minor Athlete(s) not change or shower with Adult Participant(s) during In-Program Contact. USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, and the Adult Participant(s) must abide by this request.

3. Media and Championship Celebrations in Locker Rooms

USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs, as the case may be, may permit recording or photography in locker rooms for the purpose of highlighting a sport or athletic accomplishment if:

- i. Parent/legal guardian consent has been obtained; and
- ii. USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, whichever is conducting the event or activity, approves the specific instance of recording or photography; and
- iii. Two or more Adult Participants are present; and
- iv. Everyone is fully clothed.

4. Personal Care Assistants

Adult Participant Personal Care Assistants are permitted to be with and assist Minor Athlete(s) in locker rooms, changing areas, and similar spaces where other Minor Athletes are present, if they meet the requirements in subsection (1)(a)(iii) above.

5. Availability and Monitoring of Locker Rooms, Changing Areas, and Similar Spaces

- a. USA Fencing or its relevant division or member clubs, as the case may be, must provide a private or semi-private place for Minor Athletes that need to change clothes or undress at sanctioned events or facilities partially or fully under USA Fencing’s jurisdiction. For example, a partition can be placed in the corner or event organizers can tell participants they must come fully dressed.
- b. USA Fencing or its relevant division or member club, as the case may be, must monitor the use of locker rooms, changing areas, and similar spaces to ensure compliance with these policies at sanctioned events or facilities that the relevant organization conducts, operates, maintains or is otherwise partially or fully under its jurisdiction.

MODEL POLICY: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS⁴

A. Mandatory Components

1. Open and Transparent

- a. All one-on-one electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be Open and Transparent except:
 - i. When a Dual Relationship exists; or
 - ii. When the Close-in-Age Exception applies; or
 - iii. If a Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant and:
 - (1) the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian has provided written consent to the USA Fencing or its relevant division or member club for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
 - (2) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - (3) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the USA Fencing’s Background check policy.
- b. Open and Transparent means that the Adult Participant copies or includes the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant.
 - If a Minor Athlete communicates with the Adult Participant first, the Adult Participant must follow this policy if the Adult Participant responds.

⁴ Electronic communications include, but are not limited to: phone calls, videoconferencing, video coaching, texting, and social media.

- c. Only platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication may be used to communicate with Minor Athletes.

2. Team Communication

When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team or any number of Minor Athletes on the team, the Adult Participant must copy or include another Adult Participant or the Minor Athletes' parents/guardians.

3. Content

All electronic communication originating from an Adult Participant(s) to a Minor Athlete(s) must be professional in nature unless an exception in (1)(a) exists.

4. Requests to discontinue

Parents/guardians may request in writing that the Organization or an Adult Participant subject to this policy not contact their Minor Athlete through any form of electronic communication. USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, and the Adult Participant must abide by any request to discontinue, absent emergency circumstances.

5. Social Media Connections

Adult Participants, except those with a Dual Relationship or who meet the Close-in-Age Exception, are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with Minor Athletes and must discontinue existing social media connections with Minor Athletes.

MODEL POLICY: TRANSPORTATION

A. Mandatory Components

- Transportation

- a. An Adult Participant cannot transport a Minor Athlete one-on-one during In-Program travel, except if:
 - i. A Dual Relationship exists; or
 - ii. The Close-in-Age Exception applies; or
 - iii. A Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant and:
 - (1) the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent to USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and
 - (2) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - (3) the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the USA Fencing's Background check policy; or
 - iv. The Adult Participant has advance, written consent to transport the Minor Athlete one-on-one obtained at least annually from the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian.
- b. Minor Athlete(s) or their parent/guardian can withdraw consent at any time.

- c. An Adult Participant meets the In-Program transportation requirements if the Adult Participant is accompanied by another Adult Participant or at least two minors.
- d. Written consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian is required at least annually for transportation sanctioned by USA Fencing or any of its divisions or member clubs.

MODEL POLICY: LODGING

A. Mandatory Components

1. Hotel Rooms and Other Sleeping Arrangements

- a. All In-Program Contact at a hotel or lodging site between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible, and an Adult Participant cannot share a hotel room or otherwise sleep in the same room with a Minor Athlete(s), except if:
 - i. A Dual Relationship Exists, and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs with advance, written consent for the lodging arrangement;
 - ii. The Close-in-Age Exception applies, and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs with advance, written consent for the lodging arrangement; or
 - iii. The Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant, and:
 - (1) The Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided advance, written consent to USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete and for the lodging arrangement;
 - (2) The Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and
 - (3) The Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the USA Fencing's Background check policy.
- b. Written consent from a Minor Athlete's parent/guardian must be obtained for all In-Program lodging at least annually.

2. Monitoring or Room Checks During In-Program Travel

If USA Fencing and/or its divisions or member clubs performs room checks during In-Program lodging, the one-on-one interaction policy must be followed and at least two adults must be present for the room checks.

3. Additional Requirements for Lodging Authorized or Funded by the Organization

- a. Adult Participants traveling with USA Fencing or one of its divisions or member clubs must agree to and sign the relevant organization's lodging policy at least annually.
- b. Adult Participants that travel overnight with Minor Athlete(s) are assumed to have Authority over Minor Athlete(s) and thus must comply with the Center's Education & Training Policy.

TERMINOLOGY

Adult Participant: Any adult (18 years of age or older) who is:

- a. A member or license holder of USA Fencing;
- b. An employee or board member of USA Fencing or relevant division or member clubs, as the case may be;
- c. Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Fencing;
- d. Authorized, approved, or appointed by USA Fencing or relevant division or member clubs, as the case may be, to have regular contact with or authority over Minor Athletes. This includes, but it not limited to, USA Fencing coaches, referees, event medical personnel and event staff⁵

Amateur Athlete: An athlete who meets the eligibility standards established by the National Governing Body or paralympic sports organization for the sport in which the athlete competes.

Authority: When one person's position over another person is such that, based on the totality of the circumstances, they have the power or right to direct, control, give orders to, or make decisions for that person. Also see the [Power Imbalance definition in the SafeSport Code](#). *NOTE: NGBs, PSOs, and the USOPC must submit/include categories of members/individuals that fall under the definition including specific volunteer designations.*

Close-in-Age Exception: An exception applicable to certain policies when an Adult Participant does not have authority over a Minor Athlete *and* is not more than four years older than the Minor Athlete (e.g., a 19-year-old and a 16-year-old). Note: this exception *only* applies within the prevention policies and *not* regarding conduct defined in the SafeSport Code.

Dual Relationships: An exception applicable to certain policies when an Adult Participant has a dual role or relationship with a Minor Athlete and the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian has provided written consent at least annually authorizing the exception.

In-Program Contact: Any contact (including communications, interactions, or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport.

Examples of In-Program Contact include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post game meals or outings, team travel, review of game film, team- or sport-related relationship building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community service, sport education, or competition site visits.

Local Affiliated Organization (LAO): A regional, state, or local club or organization that is directly affiliated with an NGB or that is affiliated with an NGB by its direct affiliation with a regional or state affiliate of said NGB. LAO does not include a regional, state, or local club or organization that is only a member of a National Member Organization of an NGB.

Minor Athlete: An Amateur Athlete under 18 years of age who participates in, or participated within the previous 12 months in, an event, program, activity, or competition that is part of, or partially or fully under the jurisdiction of, an NGB, PSO, USOPC, or LAO.

⁵ This may include volunteers, medical staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, officials, adult athletes, staff, board members, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition.

Partial or Full Jurisdiction: Includes any sanctioned event (including all travel and lodging in connection with the event) by the NGB, PSO, USOPC, or LAO, or any facility that the NGB, PSO, USOPC, or LAO owns, leases, or rents for practice, training or competition.

National Governing Body (NGB): A U.S. Olympic National Governing Body, Pan American Sport Organization, or Paralympic Sport Organization recognized by the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee pursuant to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. §§ 220501, et seq. This definition shall also apply to the USOPC, or other sports entity approved by the USOPC, when they have assumed responsibility for the management or governance of a sport included on the program of the Olympic, Paralympic, or Pan-American Games.

Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant: An Adult Participant who assists an athlete requiring help with activities of daily living (ADL) and preparation for athletic participation. This support can be provided by a Guide for Blind or visually impaired athletes or can include assistance with transfer, dressing, showering, medication administration, and toileting. Personal Care Assistants are different for every athlete and should be individualized to fit their specific needs. When assisting a Minor Athlete, Adult Participant PCAs must be authorized by the athlete's parent/guardian.

Paralympic Sport Organization (PSO): an amateur sports organization recognized and certified as an NGB by the USOPC.

Regular Contact: Ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any Minor Athlete(s). This excludes those Adult Participants who only have incidental and observable contact with minor athletes at practices and events. *NOTE: NGBs, PSOs, and the USOPC must submit/include categories of members/individuals that fall under the definition including specific volunteer designations.*

U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC): A federally chartered nonprofit corporation that serves as the National Olympic Committee and National Paralympic Committee for the United States.

**APPENDIX A:
ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATION & TRAINING AND PREVENTION
POLICIES**

USA Fencing or the relevant division or member club, as the case may be, must implement proactive policies designed to prevent abuse. These organizational requirements are described below.

A. Organizational Requirements for Education & Training

1. USA Fencing must track whether Adult Participants under its jurisdiction complete the required training listed in Part I.
2. USA Fencing must, on an annual basis, offer and, subject to parental consent, give training to Minor Athletes on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.
 - a. For training to Minor Athletes, the Organization must track a description of the training and how the training was offered and provided to Minor Athletes.
 - b. USA Fencing is not required to track individual course completions of Minor Athletes.
3. USA Fencing must, on an annual basis, offer training to parents on the prevention and reporting of child abuse.

B. Required Prevention Policies and Implementation

1. USA Fencing must develop minor athlete abuse prevention policies that contain the mandatory components of the Center's model policies in Part II. These model policies cover:
 - a. One-on-one interactions
 - b. Meetings and training sessions
 - c. Athletic training modalities, massages, and rubdowns
 - d. Locker rooms and changing areas
 - e. Electronic communications
 - f. Transportation
 - g. Lodging
2. The policies must be approved by the Center as described in subsection (C) below. The policies may include the recommended components in Part II and the recommended policies in Part IV. Given the uniqueness of each sport, however, some recommended components or policies may not be feasible or appropriate. An Organization may choose to implement stricter standards than the model policies.
3. USA Fencing must also require that its member clubs implement these policies within their club.
4. USA Fencing must implement these policies for all In-Program Contact.
 - a. At sanctioned events and facilities partially or fully under its jurisdiction, the organization must take steps to ensure the policies are implemented and followed.
 - b. For In-Program Contact that occurs outside USA Fencing's and/or the relevant division's or member club's sanctioned event or facilities, implementing these policies means:
 - i. Communicating the policies to individuals under its jurisdiction;

- ii. Establishing a reporting mechanism for violations of the policies;
- iii. Investigating and enforcing violations of the policies.

5. USA Fencing must have a reporting mechanism to accept reports that an Adult Participant is violating USA Fencing’s minor athlete abuse prevention policies. USA Fencing must appropriately investigate and resolve any reports received, unless the violation is reported to the Center and it exercises jurisdiction over the report. This requirement is in addition to requirements to report abuse under the SafeSport Code.

C. Policy Approval and Submission Process

1. USA Fencing may adopt the MAAPP as-is or adapt it to fit their needs. Regardless, each Organization must submit their policies to the Center at compliance@safesport.org for review and approval by January 31, 2021. The Center will approve, approve with modifications, or deny the policies. If the Center denies the proposed policy, the mandatory components of Part II become the default policy until the Center approves the policy.
2. USA Fencing must require their LAOs to incorporate the mandatory components of Part III. NGBs may require that their LAOs implement the NGB’s policies, which may be more stringent than the policies in Part II.
3. An USA Fencing may, in its discretion, require its National Member Organizations (NMO) to implement these policies.
 - An NGB that chooses to require its NMOs to implement the Education & Training Policy must obtain advanced, written approval from the Center to expand the training access to additional persons. Requests must be submitted to ngbservices@safesport.org.
4. The mandatory components of Part II will serve as the default policy for any organization that fails to develop its own policy as required by this section.

**APPENDIX B:
ADULT PARTICIPANTS AT USA FENCING**

Adult Participant	Regular Contact	Authority
USA Fencing Staff and Interns		x
USA Fencing Board / Committee members		x
USA Fencing Club Staff/ Board members		x
USA Fencing Club volunteers		x
USA Fencing Division Officers		x
Coaches	x	x
Event officials (referees, bout committee, armorers, etc)	x	
Event volunteers	x	
Medical professionals	x	
Vendors at National Events	x	
Adult athletes traveling on a team with minors, supported by USA Fencing	x	
Adult members who have regular contact with minor athletes	x	
USA Fencing members 18 years of age and older		