



USA SWIMMING NATIONAL OFFICE ATHLETE PROTECTION POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

Our purpose is to implement and maintain a program that will enable the USA Swimming National Office to carry out its mission while safeguarding athletes against physical or sexual abuse.

2.0 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The USA Swimming Athlete Protection Officer is responsible for the administration of, distribution of and training under this Policy.

All references to “employees” in this Policy refer to USA Swimming staff, paid by USA Swimming.

All references to “volunteers” in this Policy refer to individuals who are specifically appointed by USA Swimming to serve as volunteers in connection with the activities of the National Office who, in the opinion of the Athlete Protection Officer, are likely to have significant in-person interaction with swimmers.

This Policy is solely applicable to USA Swimming employees and defined USA Swimming volunteers. This Policy does not apply to Local Swimming Committees or member clubs.

No exceptions, changes or deletions can be made to this Policy without the prior approval of the USA Swimming Board of Directors.

2.1 POLICY OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 PROTECT THE ATHLETES – The primary goal of this Policy is to reduce the risk of harm to athletes and provide a safe and secure environment for athletes participating in USA Swimming National Office activities.

2.1.2 PROTECT EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS - By implementing this Policy, we also reduce the risk of misunderstandings and false accusations against employees and volunteers.

3.0 WHAT IS ATHLETE ABUSE?

3.1 Definition – A simple definition of athlete abuse is: Any non-accidental action that causes injury or harm to an athlete or otherwise violates USA Swimming’s Athlete Protection Policy (Article 305 of USA Swimming’s Rules) or Articles 304.3.4, 304.3.7, 304.3.8, 304.3.9, or 304.3.10 of USA Swimming’s Code of Conduct.

4.0 SCREENING AND SELECTION

4.1 Member Background Checks

All USA Swimming employees and volunteers shall be required to become members of USA Swimming and will therefore be subject to the criminal background check requirements of Article 502.4 of the USA Swimming Rules.

4.2 Additional Criminal Background Checks

All USA Swimming volunteers and employees who, in the opinion of the Athlete Protection Officer, are likely to have significant in-person interaction with swimmers, shall be subject to the same additional criminal background check requirements as member coaches and officials.

4.3 Additional Screening

New volunteers and employees covered by 4.2 above or existing employees and volunteers who are assigned to a new position where, for the first time, they will have significant in-person interaction with athletes, shall be subject to both the mandatory and recommended pre-employment screening requirements imposed on clubs before hiring of new club coaches. This information will be reviewed by the Athlete Protection Officer.

5.0 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Reporting - All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to report actual or suspected athlete abuse involving any activity of the National Office. In addition, all employees and volunteers shall fully comply with the reporting requirements of Article 306 of the USA Swimming Rules.

5.2 How to Report - Should an incident of suspected or known athlete abuse arise, the employee or volunteer should immediately notify the Athlete Protection Officer, or in his/her absence, the Executive Director. A written report must be forwarded to the Athlete Protection Officer within 24 hours via fax or email. The Athlete Protection Officer will report all complaints involving sexual abuse of an athlete under the age of 18 to the police and will report other instances of athlete abuse as required by law.

5.3 Who Investigates? - No employee or volunteer should conduct any investigation or attempt to “solve the problem” independently. Investigations are to be handled by the Athlete Protection Officer and legal counsel.

6.0 ADMINISTRATION

6.1 Athlete Protection Education - All employees and volunteers shall participate in USA Swimming's mandatory Athlete Protection Education Program.

6.2 Storage and Retention of Files - The Athlete Protection Officer will retain the pre-employment screen information of employees and volunteers who are subject to the requirements of paragraph 4.3 in secure corporate files as part of the permanent record. Such files shall not be shared outside of USA Swimming for any purpose, other than as required by law. Further, such files shall be treated as highly confidential within USA Swimming and shall be utilized only for appropriate purposes in accordance with this policy. Background check information for employees and volunteers will be maintained by USA Swimming's service provider.

6.5 USA Swimming National Office Athlete Protection Policy Inclusion – This Policy shall be included in relevant USA Swimming materials, publications and websites.