



To: USA Hockey Programs
Fr: Casey Jorgensen, General Counsel
Date: June 20, 2019
Re: Important Information Regarding Changes to USA Hockey SafeSport Program

This memorandum is being sent to all USA Hockey programs with teams in the Youth, Girls, High School, Junior and Disabled hockey classifications as it includes important information concerning USA Hockey's SafeSport Program and how it will impact your program this year. Thank you for your dedication to USA Hockey programs and to the necessary efforts to keep our participants safe and our programs free from misconduct or abuse.

In February 2018, the United States government enacted the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017 (the "SafeSport Authorization Act"). Pursuant to the SafeSport Authorization Act, the U.S. Center for SafeSport ("USCSS") adopted Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (the "MAAPP"), which include policies that the SafeSport Authorization Act requires be adopted by all national governing bodies ("NGBs") recognized by the United States Olympic Committee (the "USOC"). The USCSS has also adopted the SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement (the "USCSS Code"), which includes information and policies and procedures to which the USOC, all NGBs recognized by the USOC, and all programs recognized by an NGB must comply.

USA Hockey has just completed the work to address changes made necessary by the SafeSport Authorization Act, MAAPP, USCSS Code and USOC requirements and has incorporated those changes into the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook, a copy of which can be found at <https://www.usahockey.com/safesportprogram>. This memorandum summarizes those changes.

SafeSport Policies

1. The USOC requires that all NGBs adopt the definitions used by the USCSS for all types of misconduct. Accordingly, the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook has undergone changes to adopt modifications to its policy definitions for behaviors such as emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, bullying, hazing, etc.

2. The Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policies ("MAAPP Policies") were mandated by federal law to be put into effect by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, and are included in the USA Hockey SafeSport Program Handbook with specific information for hockey programs. The MAAPP Policies are prevention policies to prohibit and/or avoid situations where risks of misconduct can occur, including:

- ***One-on-One Interactions***. This policy *prohibits one-on-one interactions* between adult members of USA Hockey or those authorized by a USA Hockey program to have regular contact with or authority over minors, unless they occur at an ***observable and interruptible distance by another adult***. There are exceptions for emergency circumstances. The policy specifically addresses situations where these types of interactions might occur, including in meetings with a player, in individual training sessions





and in settings outside the hockey program.

- **Locker Rooms.** USA Hockey's existing Locker Room Policy was updated. Proper supervision of locker rooms is one of the most important means of preventing misconduct between hockey players and eliminating opportunities for abuse of minor participants.
- **Athletic Training Modalities.** This policy ensures that any type of athletic training, including massages, rubdowns, taping, etc., occurs in an open and interruptible location.
- **Social Media and Electronic Communications.** This policy has been updated. All electronic communication from an adult member of USA Hockey to a minor participant must be professional in nature. Absent emergency circumstances, if an adult member needs to communicate directly with a minor via electronic communications (including social media), the minor's parent must be copied.
- **Travel.** Travel is a high risk time for misconduct to occur. USA Hockey's travel policy has been updated for both "local travel" (transportation and travel to and from local practices, games and events) and "organization/team travel" (travel away from the home area and may include overnight stays in a hotel for games or tournaments). Except in the case of emergency, *coaches* may not ride in a vehicle alone, travel alone with or share a hotel or sleeping arrangement with an unrelated minor participant. Other adults (*not including coaches*) who have regular contact with minor participants or that are authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor participants, may not ride in a vehicle alone, travel alone with or share a hotel or sleeping arrangement with an unrelated minor participant, except in the case of emergency or with the prior written permission of the minor participant's parent/legal guardian.

Jurisdiction

3. The USCSS has exclusive jurisdiction over all allegations of Sexual Misconduct, and has discretionary jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations of other violations of the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook or the USCSS Code.

4. USA Hockey retains the authority and jurisdiction to investigate and address any allegations of violations of the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook and/or USCSS Code that do not include sexual misconduct. Prior to the USCSS expressly exercising jurisdiction, USA Hockey, USA Hockey Affiliates and/or Member Programs may implement necessary and/or appropriate measures, up to and including a suspension, to address any allegations of misconduct. However, in the event that the USCSS exercises jurisdiction of a matter, then USA Hockey, USA Hockey Affiliates and/or Member Programs shall no longer exercise jurisdiction over the matter.

Mandatory Reporting

5. It is important to know that any adult authorized by USA Hockey, a member of USA Hockey, or any Member Program, to interact with a minor or amateur athlete is considered a mandatory reporter of child abuse, including sexual abuse. Accordingly, in the event of any actual or suspected sexual misconduct or child abuse, you (and any adult staff, volunteers, coaches or members) must report such information to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and, when appropriate, to applicable law enforcement.





SafeSport Training

6. SafeSport Training is required for all adults that have regular contact with or authority over minors. As explained more fully below, includes adult-aged players on the same team with minor athletes.

7. Beginning this season, SafeSport is required every year rather than every other year. However, anyone who completed training in the most recent season (2018-19) will retain valid training status for 2019-20, and will complete training annually beginning in 2020-21.

8. A person must first take the course known as “Core Center for SafeSport Training,” which is taken online and takes approximately 90 – 120 minutes to complete. After that a “Refresher Course” is available each subsequent year for a person that has completed the Core Center for SafeSport Training. The Refresher Course takes 30 minutes or less to complete. There is no cost to members of USA Hockey to complete either training course.

9. Training must be completed before a person begins having regular contact with minor athletes, but no more than 45 days after beginning the role that requires them to complete training.

SafeSport Training for Players 17 and Over in Age Classifications that Allow Minor Age Players

10. To comply with the law requiring adults with regular contact to complete training, USA Hockey is must require that (i) all players 17 years of age or older on or before December 31 of that playing season and (ii) who play on a team in a classification that allows minor age players, complete SafeSport Training before being added to such team and prior to participation (on-ice or off-ice). This requirement shall apply to all teams in the age classifications Youth, Girls, High School, Junior Hockey, Flex Hockey and Disabled Hockey programs that allow both minor-age and adult-age players, and to officials who are turning 17 before December 31.

11. Players and officials that will be 17 when they complete training must obtain parental permission. We have incorporated a parental consent into the player registration, and will communicate with those that registered with USA Hockey prior to the consent being included.

Training for Youth Participants.

12. Subject to parental consent, USA Hockey is required to “offer and give” training to minor athletes. The USCSS has created age-specific training and we understand it will be available on the Center’s website in the next few days. The requirement to “offer and give” training to minors is satisfied by notifying parents of the availability of the training for minor participants, and how the parents can consent to and access the training for their child. USA Hockey will send out a variety of communications to parents to advise of the training availability.

Background Screening

13. There are no changes to the USA Hockey background screening requirements for the 2019-20 season. However, the USOC is in the process of finalizing a policy that will include additional requirements for NGB background check programs. USA Hockey will be required to come under the policy for the 2020-21 season. We will provide more information on the new policy as it becomes available.





Claiming Coaches and Volunteers to Your Program

14. To comply with the federal law, it is critical that your program not allow coaches or other adults (including without limitation all administrators, program owners, board members, employees, skills coaches, managers, trainers, locker room monitors, travel chaperones, billets, etc.) to have regular contact with or authority over minors unless that person has completed SafeSport Training prior to such contact or, if they do not have regular contact with minors, within 45 days of beginning such role.

15. If persons in your program are not a coach and are required to complete training, such persons should register with USA Hockey in the Manager/Volunteer category (this is a free registration) so they can obtain a member number to complete the training. Your program must claim all such persons in your program registry so that you can verify that all persons required to complete training have done so.

16. Programs should review their internal lists of persons with regular contact with or authority over minors, and confirm that all such persons have registered with USA Hockey, been claimed by the program, and have completed SafeSport Training and the required background check.

Agreement to Comply with the SafeSport Program

17. All USA Hockey Member Programs must fully implement the SafeSport Program policies, procedures and requirements. USA Hockey is required to have all Member Programs, as a condition of being a member of the Affiliate and a sanctioned USA Hockey program, execute and deliver an agreement (which may be included within the Affiliate's other agreements with such Member Programs), under which the Member Program agrees to comply with all SafeSport Policies of the USOC, the USCSS and USA Hockey.

18. USA Hockey Affiliates will be required to conduct regular reviews/audits of the Member Programs in the Affiliate to confirm that all persons who are required to complete SafeSport Training or a background screen have done so prior to such persons having authority over or regular contact with minor athletes.

Communication

19. USA Hockey is in the process of notifying coaches, officials, players, volunteers and other members that are affected these requirements. Some notice has already been included in member registration materials, and additional emails will go out over the next few weeks.

A revised copy of the USA Hockey SafeSport Program Handbook can be found at the USA Hockey website at www.usahockey.com/safesportprogram. Please refer to the SafeSport Handbook for details of these and other policies affecting USA Hockey programs. You can also reach out to your Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator or to USA Hockey if you have questions or need assistance.

Thank you again for all of your efforts in support of the safety of participants in USA Hockey programs.

