

## SafeSport Policies & Coach-Athlete Boundaries at a Glance

**1. SEXUAL CONTACTS OR “ROMANTIC” RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AN ATHLETE AND A PERSON WHO HAS A POSITION OF POWER OVER THE ATHLETE ARE PROHIBITED.**

- a. “Person with a position of power” includes coaches, administrators, judges, referees, employers, staff, medical personnel, and even volunteers or older athletes and teammates.
- b. U.S. Center for SafeSport’s flat prohibition on sexual contact covers children who are under the age of 18. Sexual contact with a child is also prohibited under criminal law; it is a felony and consent is no defense.
- c. For those in positions of power, this flat prohibition also includes an athlete that is 18 years old or older, and the athlete “consents” to sexual or romantic contact.
- d. A peer or teammate may be in a “position of power” over other athletes; peer sexual contact with minors is prohibited when their ages are separated by more than three years.
- e. All competitive levels are covered by this prohibition; not just elite athletes.
- f. Sexual/ romantic contact is permitted when there is a peer relationship between adults, such as teammates, or there is no imbalance of power between coach and athlete, such as an adult seeking Master’s lessons. SafeSport presumes a power imbalance for most coach-athlete relationships.

2. *SafeSport defines sexual contact broadly*; it is any intentional body contact, clothed or unclothed, of a person’s intimate body part(s) with another person, up to and including sexual intercourse.

3. *The club-sport membership and Olympic family, broadly speaking, are required to report sexual abuse, suspected abuse, and may not retaliate against those who report sexual abuse.* If you have a reasonable suspicion of abuse, report. You should not conduct your own investigation or make a determination of credibility before reporting. Do not interview a child; get them to an expert. You do not need to get the consent of the victim prior to reporting. Reports should be made to the authorities and to SafeSport by phone: 720-531-0340 or at this online link: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>

4. *SafeSport also prohibits non-contact behaviors of a sexual nature, including exploitation, including taking and/or disseminating pictures, video or audio recordings, voyeurism, or exhibitionism.* Non-contact sexual behaviors can also include creating, sharing, or viewing of pornography.

5. *It does not matter when the abuse happened*; SafeSport will investigate even if the legal statutes of limitation have expired for any criminal and civil penalties. SafeSport itself imposes no statute of limitations.

6. *The elements of an ethical coach-athlete relationship are:*

- a. An ethical coach will not text, email or call an athlete separately from parents or teammates.
- b. An ethical coach will not connect with an athlete individually via social media.
- c. An ethical coach will not give an athlete a gift.
- d. An ethical coach will have one-on-one conversations with an athlete while remaining at an observable and interruptible distance from others. They will not close the door.
- e. An ethical coach will not fat-shame or humiliate an athlete.
- f. An ethical coach will not hit or kick an athlete; and will not throw objects like sporting equipment at another person.
- g. An ethical coach will not require an athlete to practice or play on a serious injury.

7. *Victims, parents, witnesses and peers can: Tell the police, their doctor, their mental health practitioner, their school teacher, principal, or Title IX Coordinator.* Members of the Olympic movement must also call the U.S. Center for SafeSport and report the abuse within 24 hours. 720-531-0340 Find out more here: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/response-and-resolution/safesport-code/> Need help? Contact us at: [ichampionwomen@gmail.com](mailto:ichampionwomen@gmail.com)