

Introduction and Use of SafeSport Policy

The Upper Valley Rowing Foundation (UVRF) is a non-profit sports organization run by volunteers. Its mission is to create a community for the sport of rowing by offering a wide variety of opportunities for area residents to row on the Connecticut River. UVRF offers instructional and recreational programs, competitive opportunities for Masters and Junior rowers, and promotes education about the sport. UVRF is a member of USRowing.

UVRF is committed to creating and supporting an environment and a culture free from misconduct. The welfare of all individuals involved with our member organization is paramount. There are many reasons to row and play sport at any level. A life-long activity, people often row to have fun and spend time with friends. Rowing provides a range of benefits including improved physical health, enhanced mental well-being, boosted confidence, development of social skills like teamwork, leadership opportunities, and the ability to build a strong social network through team participation

Unfortunately, sport can also be a high-risk environment for misconduct, including physical and sexual abuse. Here, we identify six primary types of misconduct:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Sexual Misconduct, including Child Sexual Abuse

Misconduct may damage an athlete's psychological well-being; athletes who have been mistreated experience social embarrassment, emotional turmoil, psychological scars, loss of self-esteem and negative impacts on family, friends and the sport. Misconduct often hurts an athlete's competitive performance and may cause them to drop out of sport entirely. All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the values of UVRF.

Coaches, club members, and volunteers are required to report abuse or misconduct. To do so fairly, reporters should have a basic understanding of sexual abusers and the "grooming" strategies they use to seduce their victims. With a combination of attention, affection, gifts, or preferential treatment, sexual offenders select a child, win their trust (and the trust of their parents or guardians), manipulate the child into sexual activity, and keep the child from disclosing abuse.

Bullying, harassment, and hazing can involve acts of emotional, physical or sexual misconduct. Emotional misconduct often involves non-contact behaviors that verbally abuse an athlete or deny attention or support.

Physical misconduct may or may not involve actual contact, if it threatens or creates a fear of physical harm. Physical misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance.

Contact offenses include but are not limited to behaviors that involve any physical injury, provision of alcohol or illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications that may result in harm to the athlete, or permitting an athlete to return to play prematurely after an injury.

Non-contact offenses include but are not limited to behaviors that may isolate an athlete as an act of coercion or punishment, forcing a painful stance or position, or withholding or denying adequate hydration or medical attention.

Sexual misconduct can include assault, harassment, abuse or any other intimacies that exploit an athlete. Sexual misconduct can occur even without contact and represents an abuse of authority and trust implicit in the coach-athlete relationship. Especially in the case of minors, coaches must be aware of misinterpretation of overly personal interaction. Non-contact offenses include but are not limited to: a coach discussing their sex life with an athlete or asking an athlete about his or her sex life, requesting or sending inappropriate photos or sexually explicit or suggestive messages, deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in shared changing areas), initiating, inviting or responding to sexual solicitation, or any other unwelcome or offensive behaviors that are sexual in nature.

In the event that one observes inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations), suspected physical or sexual abuse, or misconduct, it is the personal responsibility of each individual to immediately report their observations to a supervisor or board member. Where possible and appropriate, everyone should be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations and potential boundary violations by redirecting inappropriate behaviors to promote positive behaviors, confront inappropriate or harmful behaviors, and report behaviors when necessary.

This policy applies to UVRF employees, individual members, Board members, volunteers, parent chaperones, and anyone in contact with athletes. Policy violations, misconduct and physical and sexual abuse must be reported consistent with the Reporting Policy as described herein. The UVRF does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities and the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

As a member organization, UVRF is in alignment with USRowing as the national governing body of rowing under the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee ("USOPC"). UVRF is grateful to USRowing and the USOPC for their contributions to the SafeSport initiative and dedication to promoting safe training environments in sport. This policy is based on the template provided by USRowing in complete support of the governing body's policies and best practices.

UVRF is committed to improving the development and safety of athletes and participants involved in rowing.

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-126) took effect in February 2018 (“SafeSport Act”). The SafeSport Act designated the United States Center for SafeSport (the “Center”) as the official safe sport organization for all Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, and Para Pan American sports in the United States. In an effort to prevent the emotional, physical and sexual abuse of amateur athletes, the SafeSport Act requires national governing bodies and Paralympic sports organizations to implement both prevention training and prevention policies.

As a member organization of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”), USRowing, its employees, contractors, volunteers, officials, board members, committee members and other designees, members and organizational members (collectively, “Participants”) are required to comply with the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code of the U.S. and Paralympic Movement (the “Code”), including its reporting requirements, available here:

<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-SafeSport-Code-04.01.20.pdf>

The Code serves as the benchmark by which the Center or USRowing evaluates whether a Code violation has occurred. For violations that fall within the Center’s jurisdiction, the Center will determine resolutions and sanctions in connection with the violation. USRowing will process Code violations that occur outside the Center’s jurisdiction pursuant to the procedures outlined in the sections below.

The Code outlines prohibited conduct relating to the following categories for all Participants (hereinafter defined):

- Criminal Charges or Dispositions
- Child Abuse
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Sexual Misconduct
- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Aiding and Abetting
- Misconduct Related to Reporting
- Misconduct Related to the Center’s Process
- Other Inappropriate Conduct

Violation of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (“MAAPP”)

Participants in regular contact with Minor Athletes (hereinafter defined) must abide by USRowing's MAAPP contained below.

Pursuant to the SafeSport Act as implemented by the Code, and USRowing's Bylaws, the Center has exclusive jurisdiction over all issues involving Sexual Misconduct and Child Abuse (hereinafter defined). Such issues are to be reported directly to the Center and appropriate local authorities. Such reports to the Center should be made through the reporting form found here: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>

While non-sexual misconduct issues may be reported directly to the Center, USRowing encourages initial reporting of such matters to UVRF using the internal reporting processes. If, following review by the UVRF, the issue remains unresolved or is not susceptible to resolution at the Member Organization level, it may be reported to USRowing using the USRowing reporting form found here: https://usrowing.org/sports/2018/4/13/18827_132107104230772015.aspx

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SafeSport Training & Access

Anyone who is defined as a Relevant Adult Participant per the definition below, is required to complete the 90-minute SafeSport Trained course:

- Any employee, board member, committee member, coach, or administrator of USRowing or one of its Member Organizations
- Any USRowing licensed Referee
- Any current or potential National Team athlete with the goal to participate in National Team selection such as development camp, trials, or selection camp
- Any person(s) authorized, approved, or appointed by USRowing or its Member Organizations to have Regular Contact with or authority over Minor Athletes. This may include coaches, volunteers, medical staff, trainers, chaperones, monitors, contract personnel, bus/van drivers, or officials who have Regular Contact* with a Minor Athlete, staff, board members, and any other individual who meets the Adult Participant definition
- An adult athlete who has Regular Contact* with any Minor Athlete
- Individuals in a position of power, including but not limited to coaches, staff, chaperones and board members, are required to take SafeSport training regardless of the total number of instances they have with minors. This includes positions of power held over adults only.

*Regular Contact Is defined as ongoing interaction where an Adult Participant is in a role of direct and active engagement with any amateur athlete who is a minor. USRowing defines ongoing interactions as five (5) or more instances of In-Program Contact during a 12-month

period. For purposes of this definition, a competition is considered a single instance of In-Program Contact regardless of duration.

If an Adult Participant has already completed the 90-minute course, they are required to complete a 30-minute refresher course in its place; Refresher 1: Recognizing and Reporting Misconduct, Refresher 2: Preventing Misconduct, and Refresher 3: Creating a Positive Sport Environment. These courses will automatically populate in your member portal as suggested courses near the time of your current course's expiration. Training must be completed on an annual basis.

Please note, the SafeSport Trained and Refresher courses are the only courses required and accepted by USRowing and the U.S. Center of SafeSport. Any other course listed in the catalog is provided as optional training for your benefit by the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

Accessing the 90-minute SafeSport Training or Refresher Courses for Relevant Adult Participant

To complete your SafeSport training, when using a laptop or desktop computer, log into your individual USRowing member account using your member ID and password. Upon logging into the individual member account, a pop-up will appear asking a series of questions to recognize if an individual is considered a Relevant Adult Participant. Based on the answers selected, the member will be informed whether SafeSport training is needed. The individual profile, roster status, and compliance records will automatically update.

If training is required, athletes are required by the U.S. Center for SafeSport to complete the 90-minute SafeSport Core training or one of its three 30-minute refresher courses and can continue following directions below. From your USRowing profile page, click the SafeSport icon on the left side of your screen. You'll be prompted to agree to the terms and conditions, and you can agree by clicking a checkbox. After agreeing, you'll see a few suggested courses listed for you. These courses are suggested based on your history of completing SafeSport training. Click 'Enroll and Begin' for the training that is representative of your role in the sport (athlete or non-athlete participant). A second screen will pop up and take about 30 seconds to load. After it has loaded, you will notice all the courses appear locked on the left side of your screen, this is because the training is a step-by-step course and will need your interaction to be completed.

Notice a right pointing arrow and 'Next' button in the bottom right corner of your screen to proceed through each lesson. Once you've finished the course, your completion will automatically be displayed on your USRowing individual account.

Resources

[US Rowing Safe Sport](#)

[US Rowing Safe Sport Training Access](#)