

Overview of the U.S. Center for SafeSport Response and Resolution Process

Introduction

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (“Center”) is a nonprofit organization authorized by the United States Congress to investigate and resolve allegations of misconduct within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement. The Center is separate and independent from the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”), the governing bodies for Olympic and Paralympic sports, and local clubs under auspices of the Movement.

As detailed in the Center’s [SafeSport Code](#) (“Code”) attached to this email, the Center has the exclusive authority to investigate and resolve allegations involving sexual misconduct/abuse within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement. The Center may also exercise discretionary authority over varied types of reported emotional and physical abuse or misconduct prohibited by the [Code](#) or by the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies.

The Center may resolve allegations of misconduct either through a formal investigation or through less-formal means such as an Informal Resolution or Letter of Admonishment. The Center determines the method of resolution based on the severity of the misconduct, the available evidence, and whether the individual alleged to have engaged in the misconduct (the “Respondent”) poses an ongoing risk to the Movement.

Your Options Regarding Participation

You (the “Claimant”) have been identified as an individual who may have experienced alleged misconduct. Your participation in the Center’s response and resolution process is completely voluntary. You may choose to speak with the Center about the alleged misconduct/abuse, but you may also decline to do so. Please note: You may have an advisor (support person, advocate, attorney, etc.) present with you throughout the process, including any time you speak with Center staff. Additionally, there are circumstances in which the Center may choose to move forward with an investigation without your participation: for example, if the Center determines it has sufficient information to move forward independently with the process.

When the Center receives an allegation, or at any point in a case process, the Center may issue Temporary Measures to alter or limit a Respondent’s access to Olympic or Paralympic movement. Generally, Temporary Measures are implemented based on the severity of the allegations, the evidentiary support for the allegations, and/or the perceived risk to athletes or the sport community. Temporary measures may include, but are not limited to, altered training schedules, provision or requirement of chaperones, contact limitations, prohibition of one-on-one interactions, or suspension from some or all aspects of sport participation.

If you do elect to speak with the Center about the alleged misconduct/abuse, an initial telephone interview with you will be conducted by an Intake Coordinator, who will review any information the

Center has received and gather basic information related to your experiences with the Respondent(s).

Additionally, the Center may choose to close a case for administrative reasons. This most often occurs when we determine there is insufficient basis or information for continuing with a formal investigation. The Center may also close a case if you, or other similarly impacted parties, decline to participate, for any reason, or if the reported concerns—even if true—do not rise to the level of a Code or policy violation. If a case is administratively closed, it can be reopened at any time if additional relevant information becomes available, as the Center imposes no statute of limitations in addressing past misconduct.

Formal Investigation

If the matter proceeds to an investigation, you will be notified and will have the opportunity to speak with the assigned Investigator and provide additional information. The Center uses a preponderance of evidence standard when determining findings—meaning it is more likely than not that an action or circumstance occurred—and applies those findings against relevant policies. The Center bases its determination of findings on the SafeSport Code or on relevant sport governing body policies in place at the time of an incident. If neither the Code nor applicable Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies were in existence at the time of the incident, the Center refers to community standards, often in the form of criminal laws prevailing at the time and place of the misconduct, to determine if the conduct constituted an abuse or misconduct violation sanctionable by the Center.

Privacy and Retaliation Concerns

The Center always makes reasonable efforts to protect your privacy. During an investigation, the Respondent (and sometimes other witnesses) may need to learn your name so that an allegation can be fully investigated. The Code requires that the Respondent keep your identity as a Claimant confidential. If the Center implements temporary measures or final sanctions, your identity will likely be known to those involved in the arbitration process. However, all arbitration proceedings are confidential.

It is understandable that you may have concerns about potential repercussions related to your participation in our process as a Claimant. Please know that retaliation against any party is a violation of the SafeSport Code and the Center strongly advises everyone involved in the Center's process against doing so—since it may lead to the retaliator's suspension or prohibition from sport participation for that retaliatory action alone.

Resources and Information

It is important to note that all U.S. Center for SafeSport staff are mandatory reporters: in other words, we are legally obligated to report any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse, in any form, to law enforcement.

Finally, the Center employs a Resource & Process Advisor who can answer any questions you may have regarding the Center's response and resolution process, and they can connect you to online, local, and national resources for support, therapy, hotlines/helplines, legal advice, addiction help, or anything else that could benefit you during your involvement with our Center. Please reach out to the Advisor at Resource.Advisor@safesport.org or 720-531-9024 to learn what resources may be available for you, or if you have any unanswered questions about the Center's process.