

# **UPHA Athlete Protection Policy – Frequently Asked Questions**

## **1. Why is the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy being introduced?**

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 (Act) applies to amateur sports organizations that participate in interstate or international amateur athletic competitions.

The UPHA Athlete Protection Policy has been implemented to further strengthen our commitment to safety, education, and accountability within our sport. It reflects best practices in abuse prevention and aligns with federal requirements under the 2017 Act.

The policy is designed to create clear expectations for behavior, reporting procedures, and response protocols to protect athletes and all participants in UPHA-related activities.

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## **2. Who wrote the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy?**

The policy was developed by the UPHA Governance Committee in collaboration with legal counsel, with careful consideration of federal law, industry standards, and existing governing body policies to ensure clarity, fairness, and enforceability.

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## **3. If I am a UPHA member, am I a mandatory reporter of misconduct?**

All adult UPHA members and staff (both paid and unpaid) are mandated to report any suspicions or allegations of misconduct or abuse in accordance with the policy.

Additionally, under federal law, adults who are authorized to interact with amateur athletes are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Members should review both the UPHA policy and applicable federal and state laws to understand their reporting obligations.

For mandatory reporting laws in your state, visit:

[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov).

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/mandate/>

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/>

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#### **4. How is the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy different from USEF SafeSport?**

The UPHA Athlete Protection Policy applies specifically to UPHA members and UPHA-affiliated competitions and events. Reports of misconduct filed with UPHA are reviewed by the UPHA Ethics Review Procedure.

UPHA 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 the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Any reports regarding suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, for both minors and adults, must be filed within 24 hours to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

The policies are intended to complement—not replace—one another.

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#### **5. Do any of the policies within the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy conflict with the USEF SafeSport Policy?**

No. The UPHA policy has been carefully drafted to avoid conflict with USEF SafeSport requirements. Where USEF or federal law has jurisdiction, those requirements remain in effect.

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#### **6. Am I required to complete any mandatory training under the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy?**

Mandatory training is not required as a condition of UPHA membership. UPHA has not developed its own training program on the prevention and reporting of child abuse, as several organizations and states already offer such training. UPHA has provided a partial list of these training courses on the UPHA website for reference. Members are encouraged to comply with Federal and State laws regarding training. Members who are already subject to USEF SafeSport training requirements must continue to stay current with those obligations.

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#### **7. Do I still need to follow USEF SafeSport policies as well?**

Yes. If you are a member of USEF or participate in USEF-sanctioned events, you must continue to comply with USEF SafeSport policies in addition to the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy.

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#### **8. What is the Protecting Youth Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Act of 2017?**

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 is a federal law that expanded mandatory reporting requirements and strengthened protections for minor athletes participating in amateur sports.

It requires adults authorized to interact with minor athletes to report suspected child abuse to law enforcement and establishes national standards for athlete safety and abuse prevention.

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## **9. What UPHA members are required to be compliant?**

All UPHA members are required to follow the Athlete Protection Policy. This applies to Professional and Associate members aged 18 or older, as well as staff (paid and unpaid), Committee members, the Board of Directors, and any adult authorized to work with minor athletes in UPHA activities.

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## **10. What do I do if I suspect sexual abuse of a minor or adult?**

If you suspect sexual abuse:

- Immediately report (within 24 hours) to local law enforcement or child protective services.
  - Follow mandatory reporting requirements under federal and state law.
  - Submit a report in accordance with UPHA reporting procedures.
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## **11. Where do I report misconduct in accordance with the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy?**

A report can be submitted through the online Incident Report form or by reporting in person or verbally to the UPHA President or Executive Director. If the report is made in person or verbally, the source will be asked to verify the information in writing before the report is accepted and reviewed.

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## **12. Are AI-generated images covered under the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy?**

Yes. The policy applies to misconduct involving digital communications and electronic media, including AI-generated images or altered content that could constitute harassment, exploitation, or abuse. Misconduct is defined by behavior and impact—not solely by the medium used.

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### **13. When should I report misconduct?**

Any suspected child abuse or sexual misconduct must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency within 24 hours.

You should report other types of misconduct as soon as reasonably possible after discovering it. Prompt reporting helps protect athletes' safety and allows for timely review and proper action.

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### **14. How do I report misconduct?**

Follow the reporting instructions outlined in the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy. This includes:

- Submitting the Incident Report form
- Providing as much detail as possible regarding the incident
- Providing as much contact information as possible regarding the alleged perpetrator and alleged victim

If immediate danger is present, contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

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### **15. How are reports evaluated for legitimacy?**

Reports are reviewed by the UPHA Ethics Review Committee. The review process includes:

- Preliminary assessment of jurisdiction
- Evaluation of available information
- Opportunity for both parties to be heard
- Recommendation of next steps consistent with the policy to the UPHA Executive Board

All matters are handled as promptly and confidentially as possible.

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### **16. How are bad-faith allegations managed and handled?**

The UPHA Athlete Protection Policy forbids knowingly making false or malicious accusations. Bad-faith allegations will be considered violations of the policy and may lead to disciplinary action.

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### **17. Are whistleblowers protected under the UPHA Athlete Protection Policy?**

Yes. Reports made in good faith are protected, and retaliation against complainants is strictly prohibited. Reports of retaliation will be considered separate violations of the policy.

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### **18. Is my child allowed to travel alone with their trainer or be at the barn for a one-on-one lesson with a trainer?**

The policy establishes guidelines for appropriate one-on-one interactions between non-familial adults and minor athletes to reduce risk and promote transparency. Parents and guardians should review the supervision and travel provisions outlined in the policy.

In general, best practices encourage:

- Observable and interruptible environments
- Advance parental consent
- Clear communication
- Documentation of travel arrangements

Specific details are outlined within the policy.

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### **19. Is my child allowed to text or instant message with their trainer one-on-one?**

The policy sets standards for electronic communication between adults and minor athletes. In most cases, communication should:

- Be professional in nature
- Include a parent/guardian or be accessible to them
- Occur at reasonable hours
- Relate directly to training or competition matters

Parents are encouraged to remain actively involved in monitoring digital communications.