



## **U.S. Association of Blind Athletes Athlete Whistleblower Policy**

The United States Association of Blind Athlete’s (USABA) Code of Conduct, Statement of Ethics and Membership Agreement (“Code”) requires all participants in USABA activities to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As members of USABA, we all must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Specifically, the Code requires compliance with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, the USOPC Bylaws, all USABA policies and procedures, and state and federal laws.

It is the responsibility of all members and those who serve USABA (including athletes, Board members, Committee members, task force members, volunteers, hearing panel members and others) to comply with the Code and to report violations or suspected violations of the Code as well as violations of any accounting and financial policies in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy. [The Whistleblower Policy also applies to employees as set out in the Employment Manual.]. As part of this obligation, all athlete safety violations must be reported, but nothing in this Policy replaces or changes an individual’s obligations under the SafeSport Code.

No individual who in good faith reports a violation of the Code or financial and accounting policies shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse membership consequences.

For purposes of this policy, “retaliation” includes but is not limited to any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, including removal from a training facility, reduced coaching or training, reduced meals or housing, and removal from competition, “carried out against a protected individual as a result of any communication, including the filing of a formal complaint, by the protected individual or a parent or legal guardian of the protected individual relating to the allegation of physical abuse, sexual harassment, or emotional abuse, with –

- (A) the Center;
- (B) a coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official associated with the corporation;
- (C) the Attorney General;
- (D) a Federal or State law enforcement authority;
- (E) the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; or
- (F) Congress.

In addition, no employee, contractor, agent, volunteer, or NGB shall take or threaten to take any action against an athlete as a reprisal for disclosing information to or seeking assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds as outlined in Section 220509(b)(5) of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.



An individual who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline, which may include (but is not necessarily limited to) admonition, public or private censure, probation, or termination of membership. If the individual is an employee, the individual will be terminated or suspended without pay in accordance with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable members and others to raise serious concerns within USABA prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

The Code supports the organization's open-door policy and suggests that members share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, the best initial contact is the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee, who is USABA's Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, or when you are not satisfied or uncomfortable with following USABA's open door policy, individuals should contact the Chair of the USABA Board of Directors.

The organization's Compliance Officer is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Code and, at his/her discretion and advise the Chair of the Board of Directors. The Compliance Officer has direct access to the audit committee of the board of directors and is required to report to the audit committee at least annually on compliance activity. Any formal complaint for violation of the Whistleblower Policy shall be handled under the USABA Grievance, Complaint and Appeals Procedures, except that violations by employees may be handled as employment matters that are not subject to the Grievance Complaint and Appeals Procedures.

All complaints should be submitted by email to both: (using the link)

- [Chief Executive Officer](#) and [Chair, Ethics and Judicial Committee](#)

The Nominating and Governance Committee of the board of directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. The Compliance Officer shall immediately notify the Nominating and Governance Committee of any such complaint and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated, and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. In addition, USABA may be required under applicable law to forward any complaint to law enforcement or other agencies having jurisdiction over the subject matter of the complaint, in which case the complainant will be deemed to have waived any confidentiality with respect to the mandatory disclosure.

The Compliance Officer will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action



will be taken if warranted by the investigation. The investigation and corrective action (if any) will be undertaken and imposed by disinterested persons.

The person responsible for administration of this policy is Molly Quinn at USABA, [mquinn@usaba.org](mailto:mquinn@usaba.org), 719.866.3220.

Additional information concerning member rights can be obtained from the Office of the USOPC Athlete Ombuds <https://www.teamusa.org/Athlete-Ombuds>.

### ***USOPC Integrity Portal***

The USOPC maintains on its site a page that provides information as well as a mechanism for reporting concerns. The page can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.usopc.org/reporting-a-concern>.