

When someone submits a report of abuse or misconduct to the U.S. Center for SafeSport, the **Response and Resolution process** begins. It is how we respond, investigate, and resolve reports of abuse and misconduct in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement ("the Movement"). Use this fact sheet to learn about how it works.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GET A REPORT?

The Center's Intake Administrators get basic information about the case and the **Respondent** (the person reported to have caused harm). They also find out if we have jurisdiction, or the authority to investigate and respond to the report.

Make a report by phone **833-5US-SAFE** (1-833-587-7233) or online at uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern.



HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE HAVE JURISDICTION?

The Center has **jurisdiction** if:

- ☒ The SafeSport Code prohibits the reported misconduct
- AND
- ☒ The Respondent is a member or Participant in the Movement

We handle all allegations of Sexual Misconduct and criminal Child Abuse. Because Center staff are mandatory reporters, we must also report all allegations of Child Abuse, including sexual abuse, to law enforcement. We refer most cases of Emotional and Physical Misconduct to the **National Governing Body (NGB)**. NGBs may then conduct their own investigation.

If we do not have jurisdiction, we may send the information to law enforcement or other appropriate parties.



WHAT HAPPENS IF WE HAVE JURISDICTION?

The Center's Intake Coordinators continue gathering preliminary information and evidence. They typically speak to the **Claimant(s)** (a person reported to have experienced harm) to get information. Then they consult with their Assistant Director to determine if/how the case will proceed.



HOW DO WE PROTECT THOSE INVOLVED?

If our information suggests the Respondent may pose a risk, we set Temporary Measures (TMs) to protect those in sport. For example, we may alter a Respondent's training schedule, limit their contact with others within the Movement, or temporarily suspend them from participating in the Movement. The Center may set and modify TMs at any point in the process. Respondents with TMs that limit their participation have the option to arbitrate, or challenge, the TM.



WHAT HAPPENS DURING A FORMAL INVESTIGATION?

Sometimes the information gathered during the Intake process results in a resolution. For example, a Respondent may agree to take accountability for their misconduct after our Intake Team lets them know a report has been made. If the case is not resolved during Intake, it may enter the formal investigation stage and be assigned to an Investigator.

Investigators gather additional evidence and conduct formal recorded interviews with the Respondent, Claimant(s), and any witnesses. They compile an Investigation Report which is shared with a committee of reviewers, including their supervisor and the Legal Team. No member of the Case Resolution Committee reviews a case they have also investigated.

In order for an investigation to find that the SafeSport Code has been violated, there must be a "preponderance of the evidence"—meaning it is "more likely than not." In other words, the Center must be 50.1% certain the alleged misconduct occurred. If we cannot meet this burden of proof, we cannot find a violation.



WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE CASE OUTCOMES?

- **Conditional Resolution:** We may offer this kind of resolution to Respondents who were under 13 when the misconduct occurred or an Adult with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability. Respondents agree to any safety conditions or educational requirements that the Center sets, but they are not admitting to the alleged misconduct. A Conditional Resolution does not mean a Code violation was found.
- **Alternative Resolution:** We may offer this kind of resolution to Respondents who were between the ages of 13-17 when the misconduct occurred or an Adult with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability. Respondents acknowledge that their behavior may have violated the Code, but this does not mean a Code violation was found. They also agree to any safety conditions or educational requirements the Center sets.
- **Informal Resolution:** Respondents agree to take accountability for the misconduct. They voluntarily sign a Notice of Decision admitting to the violation and accepting the proposed sanctions. There may not be a need for a full investigation. Respondents cannot appeal an Informal Resolution. The case is resolved.
- **Formal Resolution:** The case moves on to the Investigation stage. An Investigator will conduct formal recorded interviews with the Respondent, Claimant(s), and any witnesses. They will also collect evidence to compile into a document (Opportunity to Review and Respond) that all participating Claimants and the Respondent will have an opportunity to review.
- **Jurisdictional Hold:** If the Respondent is not currently a member or Participant in the Movement but was in the past, we may issue a jurisdictional hold. Since our investigations determine if someone should be restricted from participation in the Movement, we do not investigate those who are not currently part of the Movement. We hold the case until the Respondent rejoins the Movement.
- **Administrative Hold:** The Center is unable to move forward because:
 - There is insufficient information, or the Claimant is unidentified.
 - Claimant(s) declines to participate at this time, and there is not enough additional evidence to move forward without their participation (e.g., physical evidence, photos, videos, etc.).

Note: We will resume the investigation if additional information becomes available in the future.

- **Administrative Closure:** The Center does not investigate because:
 - The allegations have already been resolved by the NGB or club.
 - There is no policy in the SafeSport Code prohibiting the allegations, or if the allegations occurred prior to the SafeSport Code, they don't violate the local law or policies in place at the time.
 - Claimant(s) denies the misconduct occurred, and there is no other evidence.

Note: Some low severity allegations can resolve by having an educational conversation and issuing a letter of admonishment (for adults) or concern (for minors) to the Respondent.



WHO DO WE NOTIFY ABOUT CASE OUTCOMES?

We issue an Investigation Report and Notice of Decision (IR/NOD) to the Respondent and Claimant(s). It includes any additional evidence provided in response to the Opportunity to Review and Respond document. The Respondent may accept the IR/NOD or request Arbitration from an independent arbitrator. The arbitrator's decision is final.

We also share the IR/NOD with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and the NGB, but not the evidence. Claimant names are not included in any document sent to the USOPC or NGB, but in some cases their initials may be shared (e.g., there is a No Contact Directive). If Claimants aren't sure whether or not their initials have been shared, they can contact their Investigator or our Process Navigators for more information. NGBs also receive a Summary of Decision they can choose to share with leaders at Local Affiliated Organizations or clubs.



WHAT INFORMATION CAN BE MADE PUBLIC?

In accordance with federal law, the Center publicly posts sanctions that limit an Adult Respondent's ability to participate in the Movement, such as a suspension or ineligibility. We publish and regularly update this information in the **Centralized Disciplinary Database (CDD)**. Sanctions for Minor Respondents are not posted publicly.

Claimants and Respondents may also discuss the incident, the investigation, and the outcome. We ask that you do so accurately and carefully. This is to avoid any additional SafeSport reports alleging Harassment, Retaliation, or Abuse of Process. Respondents are prohibited from publicly identifying a Claimant. Claimants and Respondents may not share confidential documentation, including the IR/NOD or Arbitration Decision, if any.



CONTACT US

Call or email our Process Navigators to ask questions about the Center's Response and Resolution Process. Connect with us in English or Spanish:

- **Email:** process.navigators@safesport.org
- **Phone:** [833-587-7233](tel:833-587-7233)

Note: Process Navigators, like all Center staff, are mandated reporters. They are required by federal law to report any suspected child abuse to law enforcement and/or child protective services.

If you reach our voicemail, your call will be returned by the end of the next business day.

Visit the **Process Education and Navigation page** to learn more about the services we provide.