

CLUB, TEAM, AND GYM LEADERS: WHAT TO EXPECT



The U.S. Center for SafeSport received a report accusing someone in your club of misconduct. To help you navigate what happens next, we have answered some frequently asked questions. Please reach out to us if you have more questions at process.navigators@safesport.org or leave us a voicemail at 720-531-9024.

Words to Know

- **Claimant:** a person reported to have experienced harm
- **Respondent:** a person reported to have caused harm

What Happens When the Center Receives the Report?

The Center may exercise jurisdiction, meaning we have decided to investigate the matter. The Center handles **all** allegations of sexual misconduct and child abuse. We also report all allegations of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, to law enforcement. The National Governing Bodies (NGBs) handle **most** physical and emotional abuse allegations. If we exercise jurisdiction, we will send a notice to your NGB. Your NGB will notify those they consider “need to know” at the regional/local level that an investigation is open.

What Can Our Club Do Now? What Can't We Do?

Clubs Can:

- Impose safety measures (e.g., no contact directives, modifying a Respondent's schedule, duties, or access to certain areas)
- Make employment, membership, and rostering decisions (e.g., placing a respondent on leave during the investigation, terminating someone permanently from the club)

Clubs Cannot:

- Investigate the allegations or interfere in the investigation
- Suspend a Respondent from participation with your NGB (nationally or regionally) after the Center decides to investigate (However, this is allowed before the Center exercises jurisdiction.)
- Disclose the identities of any known Claimants to others

We encourage clubs to consult with legal counsel when making these types of decisions. The Center cannot provide legal advice to clubs. We also cannot prevent parties from taking legal action for things like wrongful termination or defamation.

What Do I Need to Report to the Center?

All adult Participants in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement must report allegations of sexual misconduct to the Center. This is true no matter the ages of those involved. You must report allegations of physical and emotional misconduct to your NGB. You must also submit additional reports if you learn more information after submitting your initial report.

Reporting is an individual obligation. That means every adult Participant aware of the alleged misconduct should file a report. Clubs can also submit one report that lists all reporting parties. Make sure to document that you fulfilled your obligation to report. This will help protect you from potential failure to report allegations.

What Information About the Investigation Will You Provide to Me?

We cannot provide you with updates and outcomes due to our confidentiality policies. Your NGB can provide summary versions of official notices from the Center to those they consider “need to know.” Any official updates about allegations, Temporary Measures imposed on the Respondent, and outcomes will come from your NGB.

What Do I Tell People Asking Me About the Allegations and Investigation?

It is up to the leaders at your club to decide what, if anything, to convey to staff, athletes, parents, and other stakeholders. We encourage you to consult with legal counsel to make these decisions.

What Can I Do to Avoid Future SafeSport Issues Within My Club?

That is also up to you. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Create new club policies/procedures.
- Require minor athletes and parents to take our free SafeSport trainings ([Learn about our online courses](#)).
- Have staff take additional training on positive and inclusive coaching.
- Use practice time to ensure everyone is clear about appropriate behaviors, boundaries, and consequences if those boundaries are crossed.

Who Should I Contact if I Have More Questions or Need Help?

Our Process Navigators can connect you with resources for support at any time throughout this process. We offer services in both English and Spanish.

- **Send us an email:** process.navigators@safesport.org
- **Leave us a voicemail:** 720-531-9024

Emails and calls are usually returned during our business hours, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. MT. We will return all messages by the end of the next business day.

We Can Help You Find:

- Answers about the Center's Response & Resolution process
- Information about imposing club-level safety plans
- Contact information for the SafeSport staff at your NGB
- Free training options available for staff, parents, and minor athletes
- Information about sexual abuse (e.g., grooming, recovering, statistics), physical abuse (e.g., bullying, hazing), and emotional abuse (e.g., cyberbullying, harassment)
- Education about mental health topics (e.g., anxiety, depression, anger, PTSD, addiction, eating disorders, self-harm, suicidal thoughts) and how to discuss these difficult topics with young people
- Information about positive coaching and working with athletes with various disorders/diagnoses

This document is for educational purposes. It is meant to help explain the Center's legal documents and policies (e.g., the SafeSport Code). It does not replace or override them. The information in this document does not constitute legal or medical advice.

