



## Sexual Misconduct

### How to Recognize, Reduce, and Respond to Sexual Misconduct

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

All of the elements that enhance sports become undermined when sexual misconduct occurs in sports settings. Sexual misconduct includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and rape. Every member of the sport community, especially adult staff in positions of authority, can contribute to a sport environment free from sexual misconduct by working together and being informed.

#### Definition

Sexual misconduct involves any touching or non-touching interaction that is nonconsensual or forced, coerced or manipulated, or perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner. It also includes any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Lastly, any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape) qualifies as sexual misconduct.

#### Notes

- An imbalance of power is always assumed between a US Sailing affiliate and an athlete.
- Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult; and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

#### Examples of Sexual Misconduct

##### *Touching Offenses*

- Fondling an athlete's breasts or buttocks.
- Exchange in reward of sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors.
- Genital contact.
- Sexual relations or intimacies between participants in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants.

##### *Non-touching offenses*

- Sexually oriented comments, jokes or innuendo made to or about an athlete or other sexually harassing behavior.
- A US Sailing affiliate discussing his or her sex life with an athlete.
- A US Sailing affiliate asking an athlete about his or her sex life.
- A US Sailing affiliate requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to an athlete.
- Exposing athletes to pornographic material.
- Sending athletes sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g., "sexting").
- Deliberately exposing an athlete to sexual acts.

- Deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared).
- Sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature.

**Exception**

These guidelines do not apply to a preexisting relationship between two spouses or life partners.

**Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

It's critical for clubs, coaches, staff members, volunteers and parents or report suspicions or allegations of sexual misconduct to the proper officials and appropriate law enforcement authorities.

By working together, we can create safe conditions for sports and protect athletes.

*~ As adapted from the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee*