



# U.S. OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC DELEGATION RULES

## DEMONSTRATIONS

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### SECTION 1. OVERVIEW

The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) values the expression of Team USA athletes and believes their right to advocate for racial and social justice, and to be a positive force for change, absolutely aligns with the fundamental values of equality that define Team USA and the Olympic and Paralympic movements. Those beliefs and values are the foundation for the previously-released USOPC rules permitting Racial & Social Justice Demonstrations at U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Trials.

During the Olympic and Paralympic Games, all Games participants (including members of Team USA delegations (“Participants”)) will be subject to [IOC or IPC, local laws](#) (and perhaps applicable International Federation (“IF”)) rules that may restrict Demonstrations in certain areas (the “International Rules”). For example, the IOC International Rules include Rule 50 of the IOC [Olympic Charter](#) and [IPC Handbook](#) Section 1 Chapter 3 subsection 2.2. Team USA delegation members should make themselves familiar with these rules and the guidance issued with them.

Team USA delegation members at the Games are also subject to the USOPC Delegation Rules, including these rules on Demonstrations (the “USOPC Rules”). This document sets out the USOPC Rules, which follow the same approach as that set out for US Trials. It also offers some guidance on how the International Rules and USOPC Rules relate to each other in practice.

### SECTION 2. KEY TERMS USED IN THESE USOPC RULES

- (a) **Racial & Social Justice Demonstration (“R&S Demonstration”)**: A Demonstration, which does not include any Impermissible Elements, that is explicitly aimed at (1) advancing racial and social justice; or (2) promoting the human dignity of individuals or groups that have historically been underrepresented, minoritized, or marginalized in their respective societal context.

**These are examples of conduct that will be considered an R&S Demonstration:**

- Wearing a hat or face mask with phrases such as “Black Lives Matter” or “Trans Lives Matter” or words such “equality,” “justice,” “peace,” “respect,” “solidarity,” or “inclusion.”
- Orally advocating for equity/equal rights for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals, or other historically underrepresented, marginalized or minoritized populations.



- Holding up one's fist at the start line or on the podium.
- Kneeling on the podium or at the start line during the national anthem.
- Advocating for equal treatment of underrepresented, marginalized, or minoritized groups around the world, or against systemic barriers to such equal treatment.
- Advocating for communities free from police violence, or against systemic police discrimination against Black individuals or other marginalized populations.

(b) **Impermissible Elements:** Any element of a Demonstration that (a) advocates specifically against other people, their dignity, or their rights, which may include Hate Speech, Racist Propaganda, or threatening, abusive, or Discriminatory Remarks; (b) physically impedes or discourages Games or medal ceremony participation by another Participant; (c) causes physical harm to others or to property; or (d) violates applicable laws. Impermissible Elements include, for example, the use of slurs, discriminatory remarks or gestures that denigrate, ridicule, or mock a person or persons based upon their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, economic status, nationality, or country of origin.

**These are further examples of conduct that will be considered an Impermissible Element:**

- Wearing a hat or face mask with a hate symbol or hate speech on it. *\*A list of recognized hate symbols can be found at <https://www.adl.org/hate-symbols>.*
- Using language expressing hatred or Discriminatory Remarks towards a historically minoritized or marginalized group, including but not limited to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+ individuals, and individuals with disabilities.
- Making hand gestures affiliated with hate groups, like white supremacist or terrorist signs.
- Violent protests or acts that damage property at the Games Venue or physically threaten or harm other people.
- Actions/behaviors physically impeding athletes' right to compete, such as blocking lanes by laying on a track or otherwise interfering with a competition.
- Display of historically discriminatory signs or flags, such as the Confederate flag.
- Defacing, distorting, or causing physical harm to a national flag.
- Protests aimed explicitly against a specific country, organization, person, or group of people.



- (c) **Demonstration:** Any verbal or non-verbal communication that involves expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, for example speech, hand gestures, the posting or wearing of signs, flags or banners, messages communicated via clothing, or body tattoos, that express or communicate a point of view or grievance.
- (d) **Discriminatory Remarks:** Acts, behaviors, or speech that jeopardize the equitable treatment of individuals and groups, with particular focus on those that have historically been underrepresented, minoritized, or marginalized in their respective societal setting.
- (e) **Hate groups:** Any group that promotes hatred, hostility, and/or violence towards a historically underrepresented, minoritized, or marginalized population.
- (f) **Hate Speech:** Any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior that attacks or uses pejorative language or Discriminatory Remarks with reference to a person or a group on the basis of their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, or other identity factor.
- (g) **Historically underrepresented, minoritized, and/or marginalized groups:** Groups in a given societal context that have been the target of systematic injustice, inequitable treatment, and limited access to societal representation.
- (h) **Other Demonstrations:** A Demonstration other than an R&S Demonstration, whether or not it includes Impermissible Elements (e.g., supporting or opposing a political group, environmental issue, or animal rights issue).
- (i) **Participants:** Any athlete, staff, support personnel, or other person who has access to athletes or athlete areas during the Olympic or Paralympic Games.
- (j) **Racial justice:** Intentional actions for the equitable treatment of racially minoritized individuals and groups with the goal of eliminating racial inequities, deconstructing systemic racism, and counteracting racist narratives that target racially minoritized individuals, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- (k) **Racist Propaganda:** Acts, behaviors, or speech relying on racist beliefs and ideas that promote racial injustice, cultivate racist narratives, disguise systemic racism, and/or target the human dignity of racially minoritized individuals or populations.
- (l) **Social justice:** Intentional actions for the equitable treatment of individuals and groups that have historically been underrepresented, minoritized, or marginalized in their respective societal setting.
- (m) **Games Venue:** On the podium, field of play, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, or other publicly visible and restricted area at a venue designated by the IOC, IPC, or Tokyo 2020 as an Olympic or Paralympic Games venue. “Games Venue” does not include the Athletes Village.
- (n) **Olympic and Paralympic Athletes Village (the Athletes Village):** The official Olympic and Paralympic Athletes Villages, and all satellite locations considered by the IOC or IPC to constitute an Olympic or Paralympic Athletes Village.



### SECTION 3. STATEMENT OF USOPC RULES

The USOPC will not sanction Participants who engage in R&S Demonstrations at Games Venues. Impermissible Elements and Other Demonstrations will be subject to USOPC enforcement and possible sanctions as provided in these Rules.<sup>1</sup> If a Participant engages in a Demonstration that includes Impermissible Elements at a Games Venue, then the USOPC will determine a proportionate consequence for the violation of these Rules based on the severity of the violation. The USOPC will also determine, on a case-by-case basis, proportionate consequences for Other Demonstrations.

For the purposes of the USOPC Rules, in addition to engaging in R&S Demonstrations at Games Venues Participants may of course use their voice and expressions in other forums, like the press, social media, and areas outside of the Games Venues such as the Athletes Village, and are encouraged to use their voices and expressions for causes they believe in. The USOPC will continue to publicly support Participants' right to engage in R&S Demonstrations under these Rules, and will not make any public statement intended to undercut or indicate a lack of support for a Participant's R&S Demonstration.

**Reminder: Third Parties.** Participants should be aware of the possibility that third parties may react to a R&S Demonstration themselves, that some of these reactions may be negative, that the USOPC will not be able to prevent those third parties from making statements or taking actions of their own, and that each Participant must make their own personal decision about the risks and benefits that may be involved. The USOPC has resources available through Athlete Services to support athletes (e.g., mental health, security).

**Reminder: International Rules.** These USOPC Rules are not the same as the International Rules. The International Rules are set out and communicated by the IOC and IPC, local authorities (and possibly the IF). The USOPC has no control over those rules or their enforcement. You should be aware of and familiar with the International Rules, which may include restrictions on Demonstrations at Games Venues or other areas. Nothing in these USOPC Rules can replace or limit the International Rules. The USOPC Rules set out what the USOPC itself will support or restrict, and how.

### SECTION 4. RULES ENFORCEMENT

The USOPC is responsible for the enforcement of the USOPC Rules, and will have designated personnel on-site at each Games Venue to enforce these Rules using procedures developed in advance. The IOC/IPC/IF will enforce the International Rules. In all cases, the USOPC will coordinate with the IOC/IPC/IF so that review of any violation of either or both sets of rules will be handled for Participants as simply and clearly as possible. The USOPC will work to help Participants understand outcomes and rights of review, and the USOPC Athlete Services team will be available to provide further support for

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<sup>1</sup> No rule can provide specific or definitive guidance for every possible demonstration. If a Participant has a question about a particular demonstration or element of these Rules, they can reach out to USOPC Athlete Services at [athleteservices@usopc.org](mailto:athleteservices@usopc.org) to obtain guidance. They also can reach out to the Athlete Ombuds at: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org) or 719-866-5000.



athletes under all scenarios. And the USOPC Office of Athlete Ombuds is always available as noted below.

The USOPC carries out its decisions and enforcement under the USOPC Rules this way:

*(a) Real-Time Enforcement On Impermissible Elements and Other Demonstration*

If a USOPC representative observes a Demonstration, or receives a report that a Demonstration is underway at a Games Venue, it will be reviewed promptly, in accordance with the established procedures, to determine if the Demonstration includes Impermissible Elements or constitutes an Other Demonstration.<sup>2</sup>

Participants who engage in a Demonstration may be notified that the Demonstration is subject to review by the USOPC and may result in sanctioning if it is determined to be in violation of the USOPC Rules. The USOPC, however, will not prohibit a demonstrating athlete participating in the event or future events unless:

- The Demonstration could cause imminent physical harm to people and/or property or,
- Is a violation of local laws,<sup>3</sup> or
- The USOPC enforcement process (including opportunity for a hearing before the USOPC Games Administrative Board as set out below) has been conducted and the final determination was to remove the athlete from the competition.

**Reminder: International Real-Time Enforcement.** The IOC or IPC (and/or the IF) will be enforcing the International Rules, and they will make their own decision on whether to prevent a Demonstrating Participant from participating in their event. The USOPC cannot control this process or their decisions.

*(b) Post-Demonstration Enforcement of Ban on Impermissible Elements and Other Demonstrations*

If a real-time determination cannot be made regarding whether a Demonstration includes Impermissible Elements or constitutes an Other Demonstration, then a USOPC representative will gather available information regarding the nature of the completed Demonstration to be reviewed, in accordance with the established procedures, to determine if the Demonstration includes Impermissible Elements or constitutes an Other Demonstration.

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<sup>2</sup> The USOPC may review an athlete's apparel and equipment before an athlete enters the Games Venue to determine if any logos, markings, or other physical Demonstrations include Impermissible Elements or are Other Demonstrations.

<sup>3</sup> Information regarding freedom of speech and demonstrations under Japanese law can be found here: <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/freedom-expression/japan.php>.



## SECTION 5. POTENTIAL SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF THE USOPC RULES

The USOPC may impose a proportionate consequence on a Participant who violates these USOPC Rules, including, but not limited to:

- (a) A warning;
- (b) Limitations on further access to Games Venues or the Athletes Village;
- (c) Expulsion from the Games;
- (d) Loss of the privilege to participate with a US delegation in future Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, Parapan American, and Youth Olympic Games, as well as other USOPC-sponsored events;
- (e) Denial of funding from the USOPC Athlete Support Programs or access to other USOPC-sponsored programs for which the Team member may be eligible; or
- (f) Performance of a specified task or tasks, such as a formal written and/or oral apology or completion of training or education on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Reminder: International Rules Sanctions.** Any sanctions under the International Rules will be determined by the IOC/IPC (and/or the IF), not the USOPC. The USOPC will not participate in imposing any sanctions on R&S Demonstrations. In imposing any sanctions itself, the USOPC will take into account any IOC/IPC/IF sanctions also being imposed.

## SECTION 6. SANCTIONS REVIEW

After a USOPC representative obtains information related to the occurrence of alleged Impermissible Elements or Other Demonstration, the USOPC will determine if a violation occurred and decide the appropriate sanction to be recommended. The USOPC will notify the Participant of its recommendation and the opportunity to voluntarily accept the sanction or to request a hearing before the USOPC Games Administrative Board. If a Participant does not request a hearing within the time period allowed, the sanction will be deemed accepted and will go into effect. Hearing details are set forth in the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee Games Delegation Terms.

**Reminder: International Rules Procedures.** The IOC and IPC set their own disciplinary and review procedures that apply to all Participants. The USOPC does not have control over these. The USOPC will work to help Participants understand any rights they may have under the International Rules, and the USOPC Office of Athlete Ombuds will be available as noted below.

## SECTION 7. USOPC RULES IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

Beginning in 2022 and at least each Olympic and Paralympic quadrennium thereafter, the USOPC will commission a detailed review and report on these USOPC Rules and their implementation, in order to identify any areas for improvement or clarification. This review will include at least the language of the



Rules themselves, and the specific decisions and outcomes of the decision making and dispute resolution processes contemplated herein. This review and report will be sought from a group of athlete and independent individuals, including individuals with expertise and experience in the fields of racial and social justice and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The report may include recommendations from that group.

## **SECTION 8. RESOURCES**

### ***Office of the Athlete Ombuds***

The Office of the Athlete Ombuds is available to provide independent and confidential advice to athletes regarding their rights under these Rules and to assist in the resolution of athlete concerns and disputes. Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds at: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org) or 719-866-5000 or visit their website at [www.usathlete.org](http://www.usathlete.org) for more information and resources.

### ***Athletes' Advisory Committee (AAC)***

Representing the athlete voice and empowering Team USA to inspire and drive positive change. Please contact the AAC for guidance and support navigating these rules. Find your athlete representative [here](#) or you may contact Elizabeth Ramey, AAC Executive Director at [Elizabeth.ramsey@teamusa-aac.org](mailto:Elizabeth.ramsey@teamusa-aac.org).