

GRIEVANCE PROCESS
OF
UNITED STATES FIELD HOCKEY ASSOCIATION
EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 10, 2023

Overview

This policy is meant to work in conjunction with USA Field Hockey's Bylaws, Athlete Safety Policy, and Response and Resolution Policy, along with the standards from the U.S. Center for SafeSport and U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee. The Policy outlines various forms of complaints that USA Field Hockey may receive and the ways in which these complaints are handled.

The USA Field Hockey (USFHA) Bylaws give the USFHA Ethics Committee and Judicial Committee jurisdiction over cases that must be handled by the organization. This policy outlines the types of cases and the investigative style each committee takes.

Types of Grievances

Administrative Grievance

USFHA or any member of USFHA may file a complaint pertaining to any matter within the cognizance of USFHA, including but not limited to any alleged violation of or grievance concerning: (i) any USFHA rule or regulation, (ii) any provision of USFHA's Bylaws, or (iii) any provision of the Sports Act relating to USFHA's recognition as an NGB.

Right to Compete

Any athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator or official may file a complaint pertaining to any alleged denial, or alleged threat of denial, of that individual's opportunity to compete or participate in a USFHA sanctioned competition.

Complaints Involving Selection to Participate in a Competition

Where a complaint is filed involving selection of an individual to participate in a competition, the complainant shall include with the complaint a list of all other individuals, together with their contact information, that may be adversely affected by a decision rendered on the complaint. The hearing panel shall determine which additional individuals must receive notice of the complaint. The complainant shall then be responsible for providing appropriate notice to these individuals. Any individual so notified then shall have the option to participate in the proceeding as a party. If an individual is notified of the complaint, then that individual shall be bound by the decision of the hearing panel even though the individual chose not to participate as a party.

Ethical Complaints

USFHA, any member of USFHA, or any parent or guardian of a minor USFHA member, may file a complaint pertaining to any matter within the cognizance of USFHA, including but not limited to any alleged violation of or grievance concerning: (i) Code of Conduct, or (ii) Conflict of Interest Policy.

SafeSport and Athlete Safety Complaints

The Center accepts all reports of sexual abuse and child abuse within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct or harassment, child abuse (including child sexual abuse), or intimate relationships involving an imbalance of power must be reported to the U.S. Center for SafeSport here: [Report a Concern | U.S. Center for SafeSport \(uscenterforsafesport.org\)](https://www.uscenterforsafesport.org).

The Center also accepts reports of emotional and physical misconduct (including but not limited to bullying, hazing, stalking, and harassment) within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Reports of emotional and physical misconduct can also be reported directly to USFHA.

For more information on SafeSport policies, please review USFHA's Athlete Safety Policy, Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, and the Response and Resolution Policy, [all of which are available on the website](#).

Committee Responsibilities

Judicial Committee

- Administer and oversee all administrative grievances and right to compete matters filed with USFHA.
- Administer and oversee all grievances related to any alleged violations of the U.S. Center for SafeSport's rules, policies, and procedures over which the U.S. Center for SafeSport has not exercised jurisdiction, pursuant to the procedures set forth in USFHA's Complaint Procedures
- Administer and oversee all grievances related to any violation of USFHA's Athlete Safety Policy over which the U.S. Center for SafeSport has not exercised jurisdiction

Ethics Committee

- Oversee implementation of, and compliance with, USFHA Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policies
- Report to Board of Directors on all Ethical Issues
- Review and investigate matters of impropriety and make recommendations to the Board of Directors
- Review and Provide Guidance on Ethical Questions presented to the committee by the Board, Officers, Committee, Task Force Members, Staff, Volunteers and Members of USFHA

Manner of Filing

Administrative, Right to Compete, and Selection Grievances

Grievances may be filed with the Executive Director or the Judicial Committee Chair.

The complaint must be written in clear and concise language, preferably in numbered paragraphs: (i) the full name and identifying membership information of the individual (ii) the alleged violation, grievance, denial or threat to deny, and (iii) the remedy requested. The complainant shall sign the complaint.

The complainant may also attach supporting evidence and documentation to support the allegation. The complaint shall be served to the Judicial Committee Chair and the Executive Director by certified mail or by email.

Ethical Complaints

Grievances may be filed with the Executive Director or the Ethics Committee Chair.

The complaint must be written in clear and concise language, preferably in numbered paragraphs: (i) the full name and identifying membership information of the individual (ii) the alleged violation, grievance, denial or threat to deny, and (iii) the remedy requested. The complainant shall sign the complaint.

The complainant may also attach supporting evidence and documentation to support the allegation. The complaint shall be served to the Ethics Committee Chair and the Executive Director by email.

SafeSport Complaints

Reports to both the Center for SafeSport and to USA Field Hockey can be made anonymously.

Report a Concern to the Center:

- Online: [Click Here](#)
- Phone: 833-5US-SAFE (833-587-7233)

Reporting to USA Field Hockey:

- Email: fieldhockeysafe@usafieldhockey.com
- Form: [Safe Sport Misconduct Reporting Form](#)

Reporting alleged criminal conduct to USA Field Hockey or the Center does not satisfy any individual mandatory reporting requirements under state or federal law. Each state has its own reporting requirements, which are available here: [State Statutes Search - Child Welfare Information Gateway](#).

For cases that do not include child abuse or sexual misconduct, sending an email to fieldhockeysafe@usafieldhockey.com satisfies the requirements of filing a complaint.

Grievance Processes

Judicial Committee

1. Recipient of complaint to ensure complaint is received by both the Chair of Judicial Committee and Executive Director
2. Director of Membership, Safe Sport, and Governance to log on Grievance Tracking Sheet and track process through to closure
3. Director of Membership, Safe Sport, and Governance to notify Respondent of complaint within five working days (Notice to include the charges or alleged violations, with specificity and in writing) and to include that the parties have the right to representation
4. Judicial Committee Chair to arrange conference call for Committee, including the Director of Membership, Safe Sport, and Governance
5. Judicial Committee Chair, after consultation with the other Committee members, appoints a hearing panel consisting of three (3) individuals, one (1) of which must be an athlete, to hear the complaint. The Judicial Committee Chair appoints a Chair of the hearing panel. Judicial Committee members may be appointed to and serve on the hearing panel
 - a. Members of the panel need not be members of USFHA or involved in the sport of field hockey but must have no inherent conflicts of interest or connection with the complainant on either a personal or professional level, either directly or indirectly
6. Hearing Panel to hear from both Complainant and Respondent and ask for any supporting information
7. Hearing Panel, along with Judicial Committee Chair communicates the decision in writing to the Chair of the Board.
8. Director of Membership, SafeSport, and Governance to notify Respondent and Complainant in writing of outcome.
9. The process must be completed in a timely but thorough manner

Ethics Committee

1. Recipient of complaint to ensure complaint is received by both the Ethics Committee Chair and Executive Director. Ethics Committee Chair and Executive Director must acknowledge receipt.

2. Director of Membership, Safe Sport, and Governance to log on Grievance Tracking Sheet and track process through to closure
3. Director of Membership, Safe Sport, and Governance to notify Respondent of complaint within five working days (Notice to include the charges or alleged violations, with specificity and in writing) and to include that the parties have the right to representation
4. Ethics Committee Chair to arrange conference call for Committee, including the Director of Membership, Safe Sport, and Governance
5. Chair of Ethics and at least two other members of the Ethics Committee to arrange conference call with both Complainant and Respondent, utilizing the intake interview checklist, and ask for any supporting information. This information to be shared with Ethics Committee
 - a. This may be done prior to the Ethics Committee meeting or can take place for a defined period (i.e. 15 minutes per person) during the meeting
6. Ethics Committee to review case and make a recommendation to the Chair of the Board in writing
 - a. Pending the nature of the case, the Ethics Committee may elect to use a Hearing Panel model, using the same process as the Judicial Committee. The decision to go to a Hearing Panel must be made by the Ethics Committee
7. Director of Membership, SafeSport, and Governance to notify Respondent and Complainant in writing of outcome and the process to appeal the outcome.
8. The process must be completed in a timely but thorough manner

Expedited Procedures

Upon the request of a party, and provided that it is necessary to expedite the proceeding in order to resolve a matter relating to a competition that is so scheduled that compliance with regular procedures would not be likely to produce a sufficiently early decision to do justice to the affected parties, the Judicial Committee is authorized to order that the complaint be heard and decided within forty-eight (48) hours of the filing of the complaint. In such a case, the hearing panel is authorized to hear and decide the complaint pursuant to such procedures as are necessary, but fair to the parties involved.

Arbitration

USFHA agrees to submit to binding arbitration conducted under the commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association, in any controversy involving its recognition as a national governing body, as provided in the Ted Stevens Act, or in any controversy involving the opportunity of any athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official to participate in Athletics competition, as provided for in the constitution and bylaws of the USOPC.

Right of Appeal

Any decision by a hearing panel may be appealed to the Board of Directors. All appeals to the Board of Directors must be filed within 45 days of the receipt of the decision or determination. All appeals will be directed to the Chairman of the Board.

The notification of the decision received by each party includes directions for appealing the decision, including the name and email the appeal should be sent to, the time period, and the reason for appeal.

Anti-Retaliation

USA Field Hockey has zero tolerance for retaliation against people who make good faith reports of violations, or who cooperate with investigations of those reports. That means no Affiliated Individual may threaten, harass, discriminate against, or take any negative employment (where applicable) or participation related action (e.g., discharge, demotion, suspension, non-assignment, negative review) on that basis.

Any such retaliation can be reported as described above in the same way as any other policy violation. It will be treated as a violation of this Policy may lead to serious consequences including termination of employment or participation for anyone involved in retaliation.