



# Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policies (MAAPP)

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Background

In 2018, the U.S. Congress passed legislation that created new requirements for protecting minor athletes within amateur sports organizations. These requirements include a duty to report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, to law enforcement or another organization designated by the Department of Justice and a duty for organizations to provide child abuse prevention training for adult members in regular contact with minor athletes. Effective January 1, 2021, all USA Water Ski & Wake Sports members 18 years old and older are required to complete the U.S. Center for SafeSport's SafeSport Training in order to be eligible to participate in USA-WSWS activities, including competitions.

In October 2021, the USA-WSWS Board of Directors approved updates to the USA-WSWS Safe Sport Handbook and adopted new policies to provide further protections for our members, called the Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policies (MAAPP).

### 1. What are the MAAPP policies?

The USA-WSWS Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policies are part of a congressional mandate that USA-WSWS and other amateur sports organizations and governing bodies implement policies and procedures that limit one-on-one interactions between minor athletes and adults who are not their parent/legal guardian. We designed these policies to work for our sport, but they are based on the uniform policies developed by the U.S. Center for SafeSport that will further protect minor athletes. Under federal law, if USA-WSWS LOC's do not adopt the USA-WSWS MAAPP policies, they must implement their own policies.

USA-WSWS's MAAPP policies affect one-on-one meetings/training, social media, electronic communications (such as social media, text messages and email), travel and more. The USA-WSWS MAAPP policies are designed to protect both minors and adults, and sports across the country are enacting similar measures.

### 2. Why is USA-WSWS implementing these MAAPP policies?

USA-WSWS is implementing proactive policies to prevent the abuse of minor athletes in our sport. USA-WSWS's MAAPP policies are based on uniform policies developed by the U.S. Center for SafeSport to assist sport organizations with the federal mandate requiring amateur sports organizations to adopt reasonable policies and procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between minor athletes and unrelated adults. These proactive policies provide guidance to USA-WSWS members on how to maintain safe and mutually beneficial interactions between adults and minors both at home and while at USA-WSWS-sanctioned events and activities.

USA-WSWS recognizes one-on-one interaction with trusted adults is not only healthy and valuable for a child but necessary to the coach/trainer and athlete relationship. USA-WSWS's policies aim to balance this fact with the need to protect children in our sport. USA-WSWS understands the majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations, and by reducing such interactions between children and adults, these policies seek to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse.

### **3. Who is required to follow the USA-WSWS MAAPP policies?**

The following individuals are bound by the USA-WSWS MAAPP policies:

Persons who are members of USA-WSWS, including coaches, volunteers, officials, athletes and others (including persons affiliated with USA-WSWS clubs, whether or not those persons are members of USA-WSWS)

Members of any national or international team and staff

All USA-WSWS clubs, office staff, interns, and board members

Any adult authorized by USA-WSWS to have regular contact with or authority over an athlete who is a minor

### **4. Who is responsible for the enforcement of the USA-WSWS MAAPP policies?**

USA-WSWS, competition organizers and officials are responsible for enforcing these proactive policies and will do so in the same manner we enforce all rules. USA-WSWS expects our community will safeguard these standards and report non-compliance of these policies.

For specific questions, please contact Frances Buchanan, USA-WSWS's Business Operations Manager, at [fbuchanan@usawaterski.org](mailto:fbuchanan@usawaterski.org).

### **5. What happens if USA-WSWS receives a report that I violated the USA-WSWS MAAPP policies?**

Reports of policy violations are resolved through the same process as USA-WSWS rule violations. It should be noted that these are proactive policies. As such, USA-WSWS seeks to educate when appropriate and discipline only when necessary.

To report a violation of the [MAAPP \(Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy\)](#), please contact [compliance@usawaterski.org](mailto:compliance@usawaterski.org) or (863) 508-2093.

### **6. Our club hosts events with the help of local volunteers who are over 18, but they are not members of USA-WSWS. Do these people need to be SafeSport trained?**

While we encourage as many people as possible to complete SafeSport training, if the work these volunteers are doing is happening in "open and interruptible" settings, they are not required to be trained. If, however, a volunteer is working regularly with your club, they should be SafeSport trained.

### **7. Do I have to follow these policies outside of USA-WSWS competitions?**

These policies are proactive and intended to prevent abuse. Thus, USA-WSWS recommends following these policies at all times. However, the only proactive policies that are required to be followed outside of USA-WSWS sanctioned activities are the Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy, Local Travel Policy and Team Travel Policy.