

USA Weightlifting Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct & Complaint Procedures
Amended October 10, 2018
Next Review: October 10, 2019

I. Introduction

USA Weightlifting is committed to the pursuit of excellence by encouraging participation in fair and competitive sporting events and teaching positive life-lessons by providing an environment of respect, fair play and professional behavior for its membership. USA Weightlifting grants the privilege of membership to individuals and organizations committed to that twofold mission. USA Weightlifting may therefore, withdraw the privilege of membership at any time that USA Weightlifting determines that a member's conduct is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of sport and those who participate in it, subject to a member's right to a fair hearing as required by the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.

In order to assist all members to better serve those who participate in weightlifting, USA Weightlifting has adopted this *Code of Ethics* (hereafter referred to as *The Code* or *Code*). This *Code* is not intended to establish an exhaustive list of rules of appropriate behavior for every situation, but instead establishes basic, ethical boundaries which all members are expected to honor. *The Code* offers general principles to guide the conduct, as well as the judicious appraisal of conduct, of all USA Weightlifting members (including administrators, officials, coaches, and athletes). *The Code* also offers more specific guidelines for members and, in some instances, provides examples of what would be considered outside the boundaries of ethical behavior. These examples are provided to ensure that, at least in a general way, members are familiar with behavior that would be considered by USA Weightlifting to be unethical and, thus, potentially subject to sanctions by the organization. The examples are not intended to be a complete listing of all behavior that might result in sanctions but, rather, examples that could bring about sanctions up to and including loss of membership.

The Code by itself cannot ensure ethical conduct in weightlifting. That can only come from the personal commitment of the participants in the sport to behave ethically. This *Code* is offered instead to guide them and to affirm the will of all of USA Weightlifting members to safeguard the best interests of the sport by acting ethically at all times and expecting ethical behavior at all levels of the sport.

USA Weightlifting maintains a live list of those whose membership is currently under sanction as a result of violations of this Code of Ethics available at www.usaweightlifting.org.

II. Scope of the Code

The Code shall apply to any individual who is a USA Weightlifting member as well as any individual otherwise involved in the course of USA Weightlifting business. The code is not exhaustive in nature and the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee, voting unanimously, may consider a breach of code in the event that an incident is, in the sole opinion of the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee, found to be against the best interests of the integrity or proper conduct of the sport of Weightlifting, or on the basis of precedent.

III. Statute of Limitations

The code requires that a complaint be filed within two (2) years of the date of the alleged contravention of the code.

IV. Exclusions to the Statute of Limitations.

Any accusation of a break of the SafeSport Code or World Anti-Doping Code (or their associated documents), or allegation of falsification of results or fixing of results is not subject to the statute of limitations.

V. Complaints from other Bodies, Information sharing with other Bodies.

Complaints may be considered from other applicable bodies, including but not limited to, the US Center for SafeSport, US Olympic Committee, other Olympic National Governing Bodies, the International Weightlifting Federation or other related sport bodies as applicable.

USA Weightlifting has the right to share any information received in the course of an investigation with one or more of these bodies as deemed appropriate by the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee.

VI. The Role of the Ethics Committee

The USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee shall be considered the investigatory chamber. The role of the Committee is to establish if a violation of the Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct or any other related policy has occurred. In the event that a violation is found, the Ethics Committee will make a charge to the Judicial Committee.

In its operations, the Ethics Committee may draw on precedents and principles already established by sports law, previous Ethics committee decisions and jurisprudence.

The Ethics Committee is made up of four independent and disinterested individuals and one Elite Athlete Representative. The USA Weightlifting staff will act at the pleasure of the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee in a secretarial role.

VII. The role of the Judicial Committee.

The USA Weightlifting Judicial Committee shall be considered the sanctioning chamber. The role of the Committee is to conduct hearings with the charged individuals and implement a sanction against the individual or individuals. Alternatively, upon hearing the case the Judicial Committee may dismiss the case.

The Judicial Committee may also choose to engage in mediation with the individual, or as a matter of last resort, may refer the case to the American Arbitration Association.

In its operations, the Judicial Committee may draw on precedents and principles already established by sports law, previous judicial committee decisions and jurisprudence.

The Judicial Committee is made up of four independent and disinterested individuals and one Elite Athlete Representative. The USA Weightlifting staff will act at the pleasure of the USA Weightlifting Judicial Committee in a secretarial role.

VIII. Interim Suspensions

In the event, in the sole opinion of the Ethics Committee, there is a necessity to place upon an individual an interim suspension of membership, the right to be a member or an interim suspension of a right of membership the Ethics Committee may recommend to the Judicial Committee an interim suspension be implemented.

In such an event, the Judicial Committee will require a hearing with the individual or individuals concerned within twenty-four (24) hours of the referral from the Ethics Committee. If the individual(s) choose not to appear, the recommendation of the Ethics Committee must be upheld. In the event the individual or individuals do appear, a plurality of the Judicial Committee will consider the interim suspension.

In such an event, the interim suspension may last no longer than ninety (90) days, but the Judicial Committee may extend the interim suspension.

VIII. Basis for Sanctions

Breaches of this Code, or any other associated document referred to the Ethics & Judicial Committees, are punishable by one or more of the following:

1. Warning or Reprimand
2. Financial Fine
3. Cancellation of Results (and/or Return of Awards)
4. Suspension of Membership
5. Permanent Ineligibility for Membership
6. Ineligible to participate in National or International Events
7. Ineligibility for funding
8. Educational reparations

A sanction may be imposed after taking into account all relevant factors in the case, including the alleged offender's assistance and cooperation, the motive for the breach, any prior offences, the circumstances and the severity of the breach as well as any precedent for similar offences.

The Judicial Committee shall decide the scope and duration of any sanction, but may take advice from the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee and/or USA Weightlifting Outside Counsel.

The following are considered as a general guideline, but may be adjusted at the discretion of the Judicial Committee based upon the above factors.

A first offence without an affected party shall be considered for a two (2) year suspension of membership.

A first offence with an affected party shall be considered for a four (4) year suspension of membership.

Each subsequent offence shall be considered double of the sanction of the offence being considered.

The offence of a false or frivolous claim shall be considered an offence with an affected party and be subject to a minimum four (4) year suspension of membership.

A decision of the Judicial Committee may be appealed to the American Arbitration Association.

IX. False Claims & Frivolous Claims

If, in the unanimous opinion of the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee, a complaint is considered frivolous or false, including those made anonymously, the Ethics Committee may recommend to the Judicial Committee to seek a sanction against the reporting party.

A complaint is considered frivolous when it is clearly intended to harm the reputation of the alleged offender with no basis in fact, if it is a complaint based around the usual operation of the sport of Weightlifting or if it is designed to waste the time of the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee.

X. Complaint Process

Complaints regarding Staff, Programs, Operations or Other Operational Complaint

A complaint regarding the above issues should be made to the Chief Executive Officer at phil.andrews@usaweightlifting.org

Complaints regarding SafeSport (Sexual Abuse) should be made directly to the US Center for SafeSport, and follow the process described by documents at www.safesport.org. A direct link to their reporting page is below:

<https://safesport.org/report-a-concern>

Complaints regarding SafeSport (Emotional & Physical Abuse) may be made either to the US Center for SafeSport or to USA Weightlifting. The US Center for SafeSport may refer these cases to USA Weightlifting for adjudication and the process followed will be that of the US Center for SafeSport Code, applied by the USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee and USA Weightlifting Judicial Committee.

<https://safesport.org/report-a-concern> (US Center for SafeSport)

<https://goo.gl/forms/CaMOLmaduwSuxxHk2> (USA Weightlifting).

Complaints regarding the Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics, International Team Code of Conduct or other Ethical Related Matters

Complaints regarding these matters should be made to USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee, using the following form. <https://goo.gl/forms/CaMOLmaduwSuxxHk2>

Complaints regarding Doping Control.

Allegations, intelligence or complaints in the area of Doping Control are the exclusive jurisdiction of the US Anti-Doping Agency. You can report an issue to the US Anti-Doping Agency, inclusive of international doping control concerns, to: <https://www.usada.org/athletes/playclean/>

Administrative Grievance against USA Weightlifting

If you have an administrative grievance against USA Weightlifting, the detailed process is applied by the Judicial Committee as described in the USA Weightlifting bylaws – these complaints do not follow the ethics process below. Make your report here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/CaMOLmaduwSuxxHk2>

Process for Complaints (excluding Administrative Grievance Complaints) received by USA Weightlifting.

Complaints will be received by the USA Weightlifting Membership Department and forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO will file the complaint in the USA Weightlifting Ethics log and provide the complaint and full documentation, without bias or opinion, to the Ethics Independent Chair. The Exception is where the Complaint is against or names the CEO, in which case the most senior individual on the Leadership team under the membership track will play this role. If that individual is named in the complaint, the next most senior individual under membership will do so and so on.

As an alternative, an individual may raise a complaint directly to the CEO.

USA Weightlifting may make a complaint against a member. It must do so under the name of an employee, usually the CEO, on behalf of the organization.

The Ethics Committee will, independent of the staff, evaluate the facts presented by the complainant. The Ethics Committee will then liaise with the CEO (or designee as above) to provide any further information, assist with any investigation in order that sufficient information be provided to the committee by all parties. However, at no time, unless called as a witness, will a member of staff be present for the deliberations of the Ethics (or Judicial) Committees.

In the event that the Committee interviews an individual, that individual may always have an advocate present. In the case of a minor, the interview must have a parent or legal guardian present for the duration of the interview.

The Committee will establish given the facts if there is a violation and what sanction is recommended, if any. A paper will be submitted from the Ethics Committee to the Judicial Committee, USA Weightlifting CEO, USA Weightlifting Board of Directors, USA Weightlifting Outside Counsel and the parties involved in the event a violation is found.

In the event a benefit of membership is to be withdrawn, the individual who is to be sanctioned or have a benefit removed will have the opportunity to be heard in front of the Judicial Committee who have the final jurisdiction on the length and severity of the sanction.

A case may only be dismissed by the majority vote of the Ethics Committee, and the authorization of the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

The USA Weightlifting Board of Directors may not find differently to the Committees but reserves the right to ask a Committee to look again at a case.

A reasonable expectation from complaint to resolution is six (6) months or less.

It is expected that individuals respond to the Ethics Committee or Judicial Committee within one (1) calendar week of notice. An individual may ask the relevant committee for an extension to the response time, granted at the sole discretion of the committee concerned and for no time longer than four (4) weeks.

Findings of the Ethics & Judicial Committees, per the USA Weightlifting bylaws, can be found under the Sanctioned Members tab of the USA Weightlifting website. Where an individual has been found in no violation of the code, identifying metrics will be redacted.

II. Elements of the Code

A. Participant Relationships

Members of USA Weightlifting are charged with contributing to an environment that makes participation in the sport a positive and rewarding experience. In order to achieve that result,

each professional member has an obligation to make decisions based on the best interests of athletes. With this obligation in mind, it is a violation of this Code for any member to:

1. Commit any violation of the US Center for SafeSport code, or associated rules and principles under the “USA Weightlifting Statement of Consolidated Member Responsibilities.”
2. Fail to follow the safety guidelines established by USA Weightlifting, or otherwise knowingly subject a participant to unreasonable physical or emotional risk.
3. Harass a USA Weightlifting member, staff member or related party in any way. Harassment is strictly forbidden. Harassment is a systematic, hostile and repeated act for a duration, intended to isolate or ostracise a person or otherwise affect their dignity.
4. Engage in behavior in media, including social media, which is inciteful of hatred towards another USA Weightlifting member and the Ethics and/or Judicial Committees or towards any group based on their ethnicity, religion, sexual preference, disability, language, civil status, age, national origin, social condition, mental ability, military status, choice of club or for any other reason incite attacks on an individual or group of individuals within the membership.
5. Engage in conduct which is competitively unfair including, in particular, attempting to injure, disable or intentionally interfere with the preparation of a competitor.
6. Engage in physically or emotionally abusive conduct towards another participant in the sport.
7. Discriminate in the provision of resources or opportunities to any member or prospective member on the basis of race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin or mental or physical disability.
8. Intimidate, embarrass or improperly influence, or attempt to intimidate, embarrass or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging, coaching, participating in or administering a competition.
9. Engage in business practices directed towards another member that are determined by a court or other judicatory body to be illegal.
10. To engage a Technical Official in an aggressive manner or tone in order to attempt to influence the decision of that technical official or to berate the Technical Official for a particular attempt.
11. To engage in conduct detracting from the ability of an athlete to achieve their peak performance.
12. To not provide truthful and accurate information to USA Weightlifting and/or the United States Olympic Committee about one’s training and activities in the 12 weeks leading to a competition, or during the entire period of competition inclusive of any pre-competition camp activity, and after one’s own competitive process is complete.

B. Participation

Any USA Weightlifting activity or event should be open to any member properly qualified under the rules of that activity or event, and every member participating in a USA Weightlifting activity or event has the obligation to participate to the best of his or her abilities. With this obligation in mind, it is considered a violation of this Code for any member to:

1. Restrict the ability of a member to qualify for or participate in competition because of the member's association with a particular organization or because of that member's race, creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin or mental or physical disability.
2. Participate as a judge, coach, athlete or administrator in any activity where that individual is inadequately prepared or otherwise, unable to participate to the best of his or her ability. {Example: a. Badly injured athlete attempting to participate in international competition. }
3. Engage in bribery or gifting with the intent of influencing the outcome of a competition or coaching course examination.
4. Engage in behavior in the role of a technical official to give any advantage to a particular member (Example: allowing an individual to weigh in outside of the limits of the body weight category, passing a lift on the basis of affinity for the athlete or coach).
5. Engage in behavior so disorderly or inappropriate as to interfere with the normal conduct of the activity or other member's participation in, or enjoyment of, the activity. (Examples: a. Coach or athlete walking off stage at a competition to communicate with judges, administrators or members of the audience. b. Athlete, coach or official engaging in disruptive behavior on the platform or in the competition area.)
6. For USA Weightlifting employees to own a USA Weightlifting club, to coach a USA Weightlifting club (as the named Coach) or to otherwise exert undue influence in their role in favor of one club or another. For clarity, this does not preclude USA Weightlifting employees from competing in the Sport of Weightlifting, or from coaching provided that does not raise to the level of being the Coach of Record for a club or an individual.

C. Responsibility

A member of USA Weightlifting has a responsibility to the sport of weightlifting and the rules and regulations that govern it. With this responsibility in mind, it is a violation of this Code for any member to:

1. Knowingly misrepresent the policies or actions of USA Weightlifting or its authorized representatives.
2. Fail to follow the established procedures for challenging a competitive result, contesting a team selection decision, registering a complaint about the materially improper conduct of another member.
3. Breach the duty to maintain appropriately established confidences of USA Weightlifting or its members. (Example: a. Speaking to unauthorized people about the communications in Executive Session of the Board of Directors without the permission of the Board.), breaking confidence about an athlete's injury or current status or other confidential information which has been clearly defined as confidential.

D. Communication

Members of USA Weightlifting have a duty to communicate honestly and openly with the organization and its members. With this obligation in mind, it is a violation of this Code for any member to:

1. Misrepresent competitive or coaching achievements, professional qualifications, education, experience, criminal record or affiliations. Examples: a. Submitting false competition totals by or in the name of athletes competing in local, national or international competitions. b. Taking coaching level credit for an athlete when the coach was not physically present for the majority of the athlete's training sessions during a substantial percentage of the athlete's career (or an athlete giving credit to a coach under such circumstances). c. Continuing to claim a coaching level title based fully or partly on the record of athletes one has not personally coached or whom another member is coaching or has coached. d. Not being forthcoming about a criminal record.
2. Knowingly withhold from any athlete or coach information or resources likely to enhance the athlete's progress, enjoyment of the sport, or reduce their risk of injury or illness. (Example: a. Withholding information from an athlete or coach in regards to international team placements or other activities available to an athlete. b. Not warning any member about security risks {prompted by the government or the USOC} in travel to certain international venues.)
3. Fail to consult with or fully inform the athlete, the athlete's coach or parents about competitions, commercial or sponsorship opportunities or recognition. (Example: a. Not informing an athlete, his coach and/or family of commercial opportunities. b. directing or redirecting opportunities to an athlete without consulting all qualified athletes, their coaches and/or families.)
4. Misrepresent the nature or extent of an injury in order to participate in (or cause an athlete to participate in) a competition, training camp or similar activity.
5. Fail to consult with and fully inform the coach of record, and/or an athlete's parents (if the athlete is less than 18 years of age) about a change of coach of record, a change of team of record, or of enrollment in a USA Weightlifting or US Olympic Committee sponsored program.

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6. Entice an athlete to change the coach or team of record for monetary or in-kind payments. It is noted that coaches of Collegiate teams with scholarship opportunities must necessarily be able to approach athletes regarding those scholarships, it is highly recommended that such coaches converse both with the athlete and the existing coach as a matter of courtesy and to avoid an appearance of impropriety.
7. Knowingly disseminate false information about any member.
8. Use USA Weightlifting membership data for any purpose other than those strictly identified with your role within the organization.
9. To disseminate personal identifying data for USA Weightlifting members to any unauthorized source.

E. Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Members of USA Weightlifting must ensure that the sport is conducted in an environment free of drugs and/or alcohol abuse. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Provide to a third party, or be a third party user of, any drug deemed illegal by federal, state or municipal law or engage in competition while under the influence of said drugs.
2. Provide alcohol to, or condone the use of alcohol by, one or more athletes under the age of 21, consume alcohol in the presence of athlete members, or any member under 21 years of age or consume alcohol if under 21 years of age or engage in competition while under the influence of alcohol.

F. Criminal Conduct.

Members of USA Weightlifting are expected to comply with all applicable criminal laws. Any member who has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to a criminal charge involving sexual misconduct, child abuse, or conduct that is a violation of a law specifically designed to protect minors or specifically designed to prevent sexual abuse will be immediately expelled from USA Weightlifting, and may only be reinstated after a successful appeal of the criminal conviction.

Members who are convicted by a criminal court of charges relating to their moral turpitude, including but not limited to corruption, gambling, fraud or sport result fixing may be expelled from USA Weightlifting, subject to a hearing of the USA Weightlifting judicial committee, where the offence is viewed in the sole discretion of the USA Weightlifting judicial committee to not be appropriate conduct for a member of USA Weightlifting.

Such violations may be covered separately by a USAW Background Screening Protocol.

In addition, it is considered a violation of the Code of Ethics to violate the customs, travel or currency regulations of a nation in which a member is representing USA Weightlifting.

G. Sexual Misconduct.

USA Weightlifting is committed to a safe environment for all members, and has accepted in full the US Center for SafeSport code, members of USA Weightlifting, as well as employees, must protect the integrity of the sport and the interests of the athletes they serve by avoiding sexual relationships with athletes. It is a violation of this Code for any member to:

1. Solicit or engage in sexual relations with a minor, a person under the age of majority in the state where the sexual relations occurred.
2. Fail to report sexual relations between an adult and a minor, where either the adult or the minor is a member.
3. Fail to report sexual relations where there is an in-balance of power.
4. Engage in any behavior that utilizes the influence of a professional member's position as coach, judge or administrator to encourage sexual relations with an athlete.
5. Make unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal, written or physical contact of a sexual nature where such contact creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.
6. Fail to adhere to the US Center for SafeSport code, and the USA Weightlifting Membership obligations.
7. To view, or to permit the use of pornographic or sexually explicit material in conjunction with USA Weightlifting sanctioned events.

H. Conflict of Interest.

Members of USA Weightlifting are responsible for avoiding both actual and perceived conflicts of interest while conducting business on behalf of the organization. It is a violation of the Code for any member to:

1. Use USA Weightlifting properties, services, opportunities, authority or influence for private gain or benefit.
2. Fail, as an employee, director, officer or committee member of USA Weightlifting, to complete an annual Conflict of Interest Form, or fail to complete that form accurately.
3. Incur expenses in furtherance of USA Weightlifting business that are unreasonable, unnecessary, unsupportive or wasteful.
4. Participate in establishing criteria or policies; engage in deliberations or decision-making about any issue for which the member has a direct financial or professional interest.
5. Use USA Weightlifting properties, services, opportunities, authority or influence for benefit to a business in which the member has an ownership or financial interest or of whom they are an employee, unless specifically excluded by USA Weightlifting in writing.

6. Use USA Weightlifting marks, name, logo, registered trademarks or intellectual property in a way other than given written permission by USA Weightlifting or in accordance with the logo use policy of USA Weightlifting.

7. To use a position as a USA Weightlifting staff member to unduly influence the career of an athlete, positively or negatively, where not appropriately based in performance data. For clarity, high performance coaching decisions made in good faith and based on data are not part of this clause.

8. To coach an international athlete in competition with the goal and intent of attracting that athlete to your team or program.

I. Electronic Communications

Members of USA Weightlifting are responsible for their actions in electronic communication as well as in person. It is considered a violation of the Code for any member to:

1. Defame, insult, curse, or otherwise degregate a fellow member, publicly or privately, over electronic communication.
2. Fail, after a written request from a parent or guardian, to cease contact with a minor member.
3. Fail, after a written request from an adult participant, to cease contact with that participant.
4. Fail to include a parent or legal guardian in electronic communications with a minor, except with the express written and prior permission of the parent or legal guardian. Where permission is granted all communications must be kept for a period of at least one year and be available for inspection by the parent, guardian or USA Weightlifting at any time.
5. Fail to adhere to all electronic communication between an adult and a minor not being of a personal nature at any time.
6. Fail to adhere to the electronic communication elements of the US Center for Safe Sport code.

J. Anti-Doping

Members of USA Weightlifting are responsible for ensuring their compliance to all anti-doping obligations. It is considered a violation of the Code for any member to:

1. Promote, endorse, or otherwise encourage the use of a prohibited substance by any person, regardless of their membership status in USA Weightlifting.
2. Engage in the dealing of prohibited substances, even where those substances are not intended for use in an athletic context.
3. Not accept any and all costs related to their Anti-Doping offense.

4. Fail to recognize the sanction decision of any body that is a signatory of the WADA Code.
5. Refuse to take part in US Anti Doping or IWF Anti Doping training when required.
6. Refuse to take part in US Anti-Doping testing, or advise any other member to not take part in US Anti-Doping testing.
7. Pervert or in any way attempt to influence the outcome of an Anti-Doping case.
8. Withhold any evidence of an Anti Doping Rule Violation.
9. Fail to report a suspected Anti-Doping Rule Violation

K. Recognition of Other Sport Code Violations

USA Weightlifting reserves the right to accept and uphold the previous finding of another sport body that is recognized by the United States Olympic Committee and/or an International Federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee, where the evidence used to find a USA Weightlifting member guilty of an offence is presented to the USA Weightlifting Ethics and Judicial Committees and is found to have met the same standards required of the USA Weightlifting Code.

III. Enforcement of *The Code*, and making a complaint.

USA Weightlifting will enforce the Code of Ethics via the process laid out in the USA Weightlifting complaint procedures, primarily executed via the USA Weightlifting Ethics and Judicial Committees.

USA Weightlifting recognizes the authority of the US Center for SafeSport, the US Anti-Doping Agency, the United States Olympic Committee and the International Weightlifting Federation. Where one of these agencies take jurisdiction of the case, USA Weightlifting will cede to the code and authority of the relevant organization.

2. The Board of Directors, (BOD) will counsel the member who is the subject of the complaint and will record both the complaint and the nature of the counseling in the member's permanent record.
3. The BOD will impose sanctions based on the investigation and the findings of the committee members.
4. The BOD will send a letter of "Necessary Improvement" to the subject(s) of the complaint.

The final remedial action will be as determined by the Board of Directors, except in the case of a suspension, expulsion or termination of membership, which shall be handled by a hearing.

USA Weightlifting Complaint Procedure Outline

Complaints regarding Staff, Programs, Operations or Other Operational Complaint

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As an alternative, an individual may raise a complaint directly to the CEO.

USA Weightlifting may make a complaint against a member, it must do so under the name of an employee, usually the CEO on behalf of the organization.

The Ethics Committee will, independent of the staff, evaluate the facts presented by the complainant. The Ethics Committee will then liaise with the CEO (or designee as above) to provide any further information, assist with any investigation in order that sufficient information be provided to the committee by all parties. However, at no time, unless called as a witness, will a member of staff be present for the deliberations of the Ethics (or Judicial) Committees.

In the event that the Committee interviews an individual, that individual may always have an advocate present and in the case of a minor, the interview must have a parent or legal guardian present for the duration of the interview.

The committee will establish given the facts if there is a violation and what sanction is recommended, if any. A paper will be submitted from the Ethics Committee to the Judicial Committee, USA Weightlifting CEO, USA Weightlifting Board of Directors, USA Weightlifting Outside Counsel and the parties involved in the event of violation being found.

In the event a benefit of membership is to be withdrawn, the individual who is to be sanctioned or have a benefit removed will have the opportunity to be heard in front of the Judicial Committee who have the final jurisdiction on the length and severity of the sanction.

A case may only be dismissed by the majority vote of the Ethics Committee, and the authorization of the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

The USA Weightlifting Board of Directors may not find differently to the Committees but reserves the right to ask a Committee to look again at a case.

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Findings of the Ethics & Judicial Committees, per the USA Weightlifting bylaws, can be found under the Sanctioned Members tab of the USA Weightlifting website.

Investigation and Mediation

USA Weightlifting Ethics Committee, by a majority vote, may engage in a mediation between two parties to reach an amicable and agreed solution. Such mediation must occur in writing or by recorded conference call. Mediation is available at the sole discretion of the Ethics Committee.

USA Weightlifting reserves the right to appoint an independent investigator or investigators at the Ethics Committee stage. Reporting and Responding parties can reasonably expect to have an investigation close within 90 days.

False Accusations

In the event a provably false accusation is made, and in the unanimous opinion of the Ethics Committee, the accusation was made with malicious intent, USA Weightlifting has the right to seek the same penalty of the party as would be due to the alleged offender.

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