



## **USA Lacrosse Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

The Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to:

- Provide a safe and effective mechanism for USA Lacrosse (USAL) Board Members, Officers, Employees, Members, Athletes, Committee and Task Force Members, Hearing Panel Members, and Volunteers (“Protected Individuals”) to report alleged misconduct or retaliation. Contractors hired by USAL are required, where reasonable, to comply with the USAL whistleblower and anti-retaliation policy through their written contracts. Additionally, this Policy extends protection to any good faith reporter of alleged misconduct or retaliation, and anyone involved in the investigation or adjudication of such allegations (“Protected Third Persons”).
- Foster cooperation in investigations and inquiries into reported misconduct or retaliation.
- Safeguard Protected Individuals and Third Persons from: (a) intimidation or threats aimed at discouraging reporting of alleged misconduct under the jurisdiction of USAL, law enforcement, or other relevant authorities; (b) retaliation for good faith reporting of alleged misconduct; and (c) any other form of retaliatory behavior.
- Encourage individuals to report any alleged misconduct or retaliation in good faith.

### **2. Policy Coverage**

Alleged violations covered under this policy include, but are not limited to:

- a) Compliance with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (the “Act”);
- b) Compliance with the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”) Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures;
- c) Compliance with USAL Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures (i.e., Code of Conduct Policy);
- d) Compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws;
- e) Compliance with the U.S. Center for SafeSport Policies and Procedures;

- f) Compliance with USADA Policies and Procedures; and
- g) Compliance with all applicable accounting and financial practices.

If a Protected Individual or Third Person is unsure about whether a matter might be a policy violation or is unsure about their reporting responsibility for a particular type of matter, please start by reviewing the applicable policy. USAL employees should also refer to the Employee Handbook or contact HR for more information.

Please keep in mind that some violations must be reported due to the mandatory reporting requirements for USAL Participants consistent with the USAL Athlete Protection & Safety Policy and U.S. Center for SafeSport's Code (the "Code") for the Olympic and Paralympic Movement and nothing in this Policy changes or replaces a Participant's mandatory reporting obligations under the Code. If you have any questions about these obligations, contact the USAL Athlete Protection & Safety Manager or Legal Counsel.

In addition, if a Covered Individual suspects any criminal activity against a person or property, please report this directly to law enforcement immediately.

### **3. Retaliation**

Retaliation is defined by, but not limited to, Section 220501(b)11 of the Act. The Act states, in pertinent part, that retaliation means any adverse or discriminatory action, or threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, including removal from a training facility, reduced coaching or training, reduced meals or housing, and removal from competition carried out against a Protected Individual as a result of any communication, including the filing of a formal complaint, by the Protected Individual or a parent or legal guardian of the Protected Individual relating to the allegation of physical abuse, sexual harassment, or emotional abuse, with the United States Center for SafeSport; a coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official associated with the USOPC; the United States Attorney General; a federal or state law enforcement authority; the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission; or Congress. Retaliation also refers to any adverse or discriminatory action, or the threat of an adverse or discriminatory action, against any person who in good faith reports misconduct, and/or violations of the USOPC's or NGB's Bylaws, policies, and procedures. Athletes who disclose information to or seek assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds are also protected from retaliation as set forth in Section 220509(b)(5) of the Act.

Additionally, no Protected Individual nor USAL shall take or threaten any action against an athlete as a reprisal for disclosing information to, or seeking assistance from, the Office of the Athlete Ombuds. Similarly, no Protected Individual or USAL

shall retaliate against an employee or contractor with the intent or effect of adversely affecting the terms or conditions of employment or other contractual rights (including, but not limited to, threats of physical harm, loss of job, punitive work assignments, impact on salary or wages, or impact on contractual payments).

#### **4. No Retaliation**

USAL has zero tolerance for Retaliation against a Whistleblower or any Protected Individual or Third Person who makes good faith reports or cooperates with investigations of alleged violations.

#### **5. Reporting an Alleged Violation**

Protected Individuals have the right to report alleged violations of this policy and USAL encourages reporting of such allegations. Suspected violations shall be considered an **Administrative Grievance** and reported via the **USAL Grievance Reporting Form** [[usalaxmisconductsubmission](#)] consistent with the **USAL Grievance Policy** [[Greivance Policy USAL .pdf](#)].

Alleged violations of this Policy in relation to Athlete Protection & Safety related matters shall be reported via the **USAL Online Athlete Protection & Safety Reporting form** [[usalaxmisconductsubmission](#)]. USAL's full Athlete Protection information can be found at [Athlete Protection | USA Lacrosse](#).

Additionally, USAL Employees should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, or CEO. Employees can also submit their complaint to Human Resources. If USAL finds that an employee has retaliated against a Protected Individual(s) and/or Protected Third Person(s), that person must be immediately terminated or suspended without pay as required by Section 220509(c)(2) of the Act.

Please remember that as a reporter, you do not need to (and should not) investigate the matter you are concerned about or determine fault or how to fix it. A reporter does their part by making an issue known so the appropriate people can act. Investigations of reports are discussed below.

#### **6. Investigation**

Once a report is received, allegations will be investigated in accordance with the USAL Grievance Policy and Athlete Protection & Safety Policy. In all cases, matters will be investigated by a disinterested party.

USAL is committed to reviewing all incoming reports, but there may be occasions where a report will be dismissed without investigation. Such circumstances can

include the reporter declining to participate in the investigation, an allegation that is not actionable by USAL, or insufficient evidence for an allegation such that an investigation is not warranted.

## **7. Acting in Good Faith**

Individual reporting a perceived violation must have a reasonable basis for believing there is a violation. Knowingly making a false allegation is a violation of this Policy and shall be reported as such.

## **8. Confidentiality**

All such reports will be treated as confidential as possible. However, disclosure of an individual's identity or identifying information may be required in some situations, such as to conduct a thorough investigation, provide accused individuals fair process, and where USAL is required by law to report a matter to law enforcement. As USAL has an obligation to investigate alleged violations, please remember there is no such thing as an "unofficial" or "off the record" report.

## **9. Additional Resources**

Contact information for those at USAL responsible for the policy:

Covered Individuals who wish to report concerns related to this Policy as it relates to involvement in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement or are uncomfortable reporting a concern directly to their NGB, may also submit a report using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#). The Integrity Portal allows individuals to submit concerns to the USOPC confidentially and/or anonymously. Reports can also be made online or by telephone.

The Athlete Ombuds provides cost-free, independent, and confidential advice on variety of sport related matters, including their rights, applicable rules, policies or processes, and questions related to resolving disputes and grievances. The Athlete Ombuds can also help Team USA Athletes connect with legal counsel or mental health resources if needed. Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds at:

Phone: 719-866-5000

Email:

[ombudsman@usaathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usaathlete.org)

[athleteprotection@usalacrosse.com](mailto:athleteprotection@usalacrosse.com)

Website:

<https://www.usopc.org/athlete-ombuds>

[USOPC Integrity Portal](#)