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May 13, 2019

To: Presidents of Clubs, Regional/State Associations, and National Curling Organizations

From: Rick Patzke, CEO, USA Curling

**RE: Compliance with SafeSport Law/Policy**

This is an update regarding compliance with S.534, the "[Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017](#)." This federal law was put into place in an attempt to prevent abuse of minors in Olympic sports. As a reminder, boards of directors and individuals who have regular contact with minors in local, state/regional, and national curling organizations need to complete abuse and harassment prevention training through the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center). If your organization has not completed this aspect of compliance to date, we encourage you to complete this process as soon as possible. Please see attached documents to access the training.

**The law also requires sports organizations to adopt policies regarding one-on-one interactions with minors by June 23, 2019.** All location, state, regional, and national curling organizations must adopt policies to help prevent abuse of minors in their organizations. To help clubs with this process, USA Curling has developed sample policy based on information distributed by the Center. All member organizations are required to adopt policies that encompass the minimum requirements outlined below. Organizations are encouraged to include the optional components of the policy below as customized to best meet the needs of the specific groups and/or develop stricter guidelines to help ensure the safety of minors.

If a member organization does not develop its own policy that meets the minimum standard, the mandatory components outlined in this document become the default policy of the member organization as of June 23, 2019. While member organizations have the right to revise their policies at any time, all policies must continue to meet the minimum standards outlined in this document.

Below you will find USA Curling's policy on one-on-one interactions that was approved by the Board of Directors of the U.S. Curling Association on May 11, 2019, as part of the adoption of new Minor Athlete



Abuse Prevention Policies included within the current [USA Curling SafeSport Handbook](#). All member organizations are required to adopt a policy that includes the mandatory items by June 23, 2019.

### **One-on-One Interactions**

All adult members of organizations that are members of the USCA must comply with items **A and B**. USCA member organizations are also encouraged to incorporate items C and D into their respective minor abuse prevention policies as best meets the needs of their organizations.

- A. All one-on-one interactions must be observable and interruptible:
  - One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility partially or fully under USA Curling's jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of a member organization are permitted if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult.
  - Other one-on-one interactions between minor athletes and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility partially or fully under USA Curling's jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of a member organization are prohibited, except in the circumstances described in part C of this section and under emergency circumstances.
  
- B. Additionally, meetings must comply with the following:
  - Meetings between Applicable Adults and minor athletes at a facility partially or fully under USA Curling's jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of a member organization may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
  - If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office at a facility partially or fully under USA Curling's jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of a USCA member organization, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. If available, it will occur in an office that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
  
- C. Meetings with mental health care professionals and health care providers:
  - If a mental health care professional and/or health care provider meets with minor athletes at a facility partially or fully under USA Curling's jurisdiction, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:
    - (1) the door remains unlocked;
    - (2) another adult is present at the facility;
    - (3) the other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and
    - (4) written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the mental health care professional and/or health care provider, with a copy provided to an appropriate representative of USA Curling.

D. Individual training sessions:

- Individual training sessions between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted at a facility partially or fully under USA Curling's jurisdiction if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult.
- It is the responsibility of the Applicable Adult to obtain the written permission of the minor's legal guardian in advance of the individual training session if the individual training session is not observable and interruptible by another adult.
- Permission for individual training sessions must be obtained at least every six months. Parents, guardians, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe the training session.

### **Massages and Rubdowns/Athletic Training Modalities**

This aspect of the policy shall apply to **all adult members of organizations that are members of the USCA.**

A. Guidelines regarding massages and rubdowns/athletic training modalities:

- Any massage or rubdown/athletic training modality performed at a facility, training, or competition venue must be conducted in an open and interruptible location.
- Any massage of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and the person performing the massage or rubdown/athletic training modality in the room.

### **Locker Rooms and Changing Areas**

All adult members of organizations that are members of the U.S. Curling Association must comply with items **A and B**. USCA member organizations are encouraged to adopt items C and D into their respective minor abuse prevention policies.

If USA Curling uses a facility not fully under the organization's jurisdiction (for, e.g., training or competition or similar events) and the facility is used by multiple constituents, Applicable Adults listed above are nonetheless required to adhere to the rules set forth below.

A. Use of recording devices:

- Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces at a facility under USA Curling's jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of a USCA member organization is prohibited.

- Exceptions may be made for media and championship celebrations, provided that such exceptions are approved by USA Curling or a USCA member organization and two or more Applicable Adults are present.
- B. Undress:
- Under no circumstances shall an unrelated Applicable Adult at a facility under USA Curling's jurisdiction/partial jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of a USCA member organization intentionally expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a minor athlete.
- C. One-on-one interactions:
- Except for athletes on the same team, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area when at a facility under USA Curling's partial or full jurisdiction, except under emergency circumstances.
  - If USA Curling is using a facility that only has a single locker room or changing area, USA Curling will designate separate times for use by Applicable Adults, if any.
- D. Monitoring:
- USA Curling will regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas at facilities under the organization's jurisdiction to ensure compliance with these policies.

### **Electronic Communications and Social Media**

All adult members of organizations that are members of the U.S. Curling Association must comply with items **A and C**. USCA member organizations are encouraged to incorporate item B into their respective minor abuse prevention policies.

- A. Communication content:
- All electronic communication originating from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.
- B. Open and transparent:
- Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), another Applicable Adult or the minor's legal guardian will be copied.
  - If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult should respond to the minor athlete with a copy to another Applicable Adult or the minor's legal guardian.

- When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult will copy another adult.
  - Minor athletes may “friend” USA Curling’s official pages, including team and high performance program pages.
- C. Requests to discontinue:
- Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted directly through any form of electronic communication by the organization or by the Applicable Adults subject to this policy. Applicable Adults, USA Curling, and USCA member organizations will abide by any such request that their minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, absent emergency circumstances.

### **Local Travel**

Organizations that are members of the USCA, including clubs, state/regional, and national associations, are encouraged to adopt these guidelines as best suited to their organizations.

- A. Transportation:
- Applicable Adults who are not also acting as a legal guardian, shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must have at least two minor athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete’s parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel.
  - USA Curling encourages parents/legal guardians to pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangements.

### **Team Travel**

Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.

All adult members of organizations that are members of the USCA must comply with items **B and C**. Member organizations are encouraged to incorporate item A into their respective minor abuse prevention policies as best suited to their organizations.

- A. Team/competition travel:
- When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete must have his/her legal guardian’s written permission in advance and for each competition to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.
- B. Hotel rooms:
- Applicable Adults shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete (unless the Applicable Adult is the legal guardian, sibling, or is otherwise related to the minor athlete).

- However, a parent/legal guardian may consent to such an arrangement in advance and in writing.
  - Furthermore, a parent/legal guardian may consent in advance and in writing to the minor athlete sharing a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an adult athlete.
- C. Meetings:
- Meetings shall be conducted consistent with the organization's policy for one-on-one interactions (i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible).

### **Minor athletes who become adult athletes**

With the exception of athletes who are members of the same team, Minor Athletes who reach the age of majority (i.e. 18 years of age) must adhere to the provisions found in Section 2 of this document when interacting with minor athletes who are 14 years of age or younger.

Minor Athletes who reach the age of majority and then obtain a non-athlete position of authority that presents a power imbalance, such as becoming a coach or official, must also comply with these prevention policies regardless of the age of the minor athletes with whom they will interact. Please see above to determine appropriate application of these policies to a particular situation.