



## Coaches Code of Conduct

[August 20th, 2020]

The athlete/coach relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal and athletic development of their athletes. They must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of a sport organization are channeled. Thus, how athletes regard their sport and USA Climbing is often dependent on the behavior of the coach(es). The following code of conduct has been developed to aid coaches in achieving a level of behavior that will allow them to assist their athletes in becoming well-rounded, self-confident, and productive individuals.

### Coaches Obligations

Coaches shall:

1. Ensure the safety of their athletes, with whom they work, and the athletes around them.
2. Adhere to USA Climbing's SafeSport policies and procedures, including USA Climbing's SafeSport Policy and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy. These policies may be amended from time to time, in order to protect athletes from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. All coaches are required to complete USA Climbing's annual SafeSport training.
3. Follow all rules and policies as outlined in the USA Climbing rule books.
4. Adhere to the anti-doping rules and procedures adopted by the United States Anti-Doping Agency and World Anti-Doping Agency, as such rules may be amended from time to time and never advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance-enhancing substances.
5. Treat all athletes, parents, coaches, volunteers, judges/officials, and USA Climbing associates fairly and with respect.
6. Not actively pursue or solicit athletes who are members of another team.
7. Treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, race, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, religion, economic status, disability, or team affiliation.
8. Direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the athlete.
9. Consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of their sport, USA Climbing, and of coaching.



For example, coaches shall:

- a) Refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches, athletes, parents, judges and USA Climbing;
  - b) Abstain from the use of tobacco while in the presence of their athletes and discourage its use, and refrain from the consumption of alcohol or other behavior-altering substances while responsible for minors;
  - c) Discourage the use of alcohol in conjunction with events or victory celebrations; and
  - d) Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of their duties.
10. Ensure that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe, fun environment.
  11. Consider the athlete's future health and well-being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue climbing or training.
  12. Regularly seek ways of increasing professional development, maintaining a connection to the climbing community, and keeping current with USA Climbing rules and policies.
  13. Treat opponents, host facility personnel, judges/officials, parents, and USA Climbing associates with due respect, both in victory and defeat, and teach and encourage athletes to do the same.
  14. In the case of minors, communicate and cooperate with the athlete's parents or guardians, involving them in decisions pertaining to their child's development.
  15. Be aware of the academic pressure placed on student-athletes and conduct practices and competitions in a manner so as to allow academic success.
  16. Promptly disclose in writing to USA Climbing any and all of the following (including pending cases):
    - SEX OFFENSES
      - All Sex Offenses – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.
      - Examples include: child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, prostitution, pornography, indecent exposure, etc.
      - Sex offender registrant.
    - FELONIES
      - All Felony Violence – Regardless of the amount of time since offense  
Examples include: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated Burglary, etc.
      - All Felony offenses other than violence or sex – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.  
Examples include: drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc



- MISDEMEANORS
  - All misdemeanor violence offenses – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.  
Examples include: simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit & run, etc.
  - All misdemeanor drug & alcohol offenses within the past 5 years or multiple offenses[1]regardless of the amount of time since offense.  
Examples include: driving under the influence, simple drug possession, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.
  - Any other misdemeanor involving harm to minors – Regardless of the amount of time since offense  
Examples include: contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor, theft of team funds if person is handling monies, etc.
  - Any offense involving cruelty to animals – Regardless of the amount of time since offense
  
- PENDING CASES
  - A Covered Individual who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court should not be permitted to serve as a Covered Individual until the official adjudication of the case.
  
- Other Potentially Disqualifying Factors  
Even if a Covered Individual passes a criminal background check, other factors may disqualify the Covered Individual from employment with USA Climbing or participation in USA Climbing programs. An individual may be disqualified if the individual has:
  - Been subject to any court order involving any emotional, sexual, or physical abuse of another person, including but not limited, to domestic order of protection;
  - A history with another organization (employment, volunteer, etc.) of complaints of emotional, sexual, or physical abuse of another person;
  - Resigned, been terminated, or been asked to resign from a position–paid or unpaid–due to complaint(s) of emotional, sexual, or physical abuse of another person;
  - A history of other behavior that demonstrates the potential for danger to participants in USA Climbing;
  - Given false or misleading information; or
  - Not met the job requirements.

## Repercussions

Failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include the issuance of a warning, or temporary or permanent loss of coaching privileges.



## Coaches Attestation

I have read and understand the above statements and agree to adhere to this USA Climbing Coaches Code of Conduct. I consent to disclosure to any third party, including to the climbing gym or climbing program where I am employed or seeking to be employed, of information regarding the results of any background check, any allegations against me, and any decision by USA Climbing to provisionally or conclusively deny, suspend or condition my coaching certification, to the extent that disclosure of such information is related to USA Climbing's efforts to promote athlete and other member safety and well-being. I acknowledge and agree that my exclusive remedies for disputes arising out of my coaching certification are (a) a hearing conducted by a hearing panel convened by USA Climbing, and, if I have availed myself of that hearing and dispute the outcome, (b) arbitration conducted under the applicable rules of the American Arbitration Association.

[1] Multiple charges related to the same underlying offense on the same date are not considered "multiple offenses."