

# USA Climbing Policy

## Competition Eligibility



*USA Climbing does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin.*

*USA Climbing believes that every eligible athlete has the right to compete in a respectful, safe and harassment-free environment and has the right to participate in fair competition in accordance with USA Climbing's rules, policies, and mission.*

## Purpose & Scope

The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) has concluded that, in accordance with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. § 220501 et seq., and further pursuant to Executive Order 14201 (which references definitions in Executive Order 14168), which the USOPC has determined to be applicable to National Governing Bodies ("NGBs"), and to ensure compliance with the NGB Athlete Safety Policy, all NGBs must adopt the definition of the Women's Category as described below. Failure of an NGB to do so may result in sanctions imposed by the USOPC, including the potential loss of its status as an NGB.

The USA Climbing Competition Eligibility Policy ("this Policy") sets forth the requirements to remain in compliance with the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy as well as USA Climbing requirements and procedures regarding a member athlete's eligibility to participate in a sanctioned USA Climbing Competition. This policy applies to all USA Climbing sanctioned events. For the sake of clarity, this policy does not apply to training or training events. The term "Female" is used interchangeably with the term "Women" throughout this document and in the implementation of this policy.

## Policy

The USOPC requires USA Climbing to adopt the following provision from the USOPC's NGB Athlete Safety Policy:

*"[National Governing Bodies] are committed to protecting opportunities for athletes participating in sport. [National Governing Bodies] will continue to collaborate with various stakeholders with oversight responsibilities, e.g., [International Olympic Committee], [International Paralympic Committee], international federations, to ensure that women have a fair and safe competition environment consistent with Executive Order 14201 and the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. § 22501, et. Seq."*

USA Climbing, therefore, adopts the above USOPC NGB Athlete Safety Policy language as part of the following Competition Eligibility Policy.

### Male / Open Category:

Any individual, regardless of their assigned sex at birth, is permitted to compete in the Male / Open Category at USA Climbing sanctioned events, subject to any and all regulations provided in the [USA Climbing Rulebook](#).

### Female Category:

Pursuant to the requirements set out above, the Female Category is limited to individuals who were assigned female at birth.

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### **Administrative Application of the Female Category:**

An athlete's eligibility status will be determined during the membership application and/or USA Climbing sanctioned event registration process. When applying for membership or registering for a USA Climbing sanctioned event in the Female Category, an individual represents and warrants to USA Climbing that they are female, which creates a rebuttable presumption that the individual's sex assigned at birth was concordantly assigned female. At its discretion, USA Climbing may choose to challenge this presumption. The determination of whether an individual is female may be established through the individual's original birth certificate or other reliable facts, which shall be determined at USA Climbing's discretion. USA Climbing's Medical Review Panel (see below) will individually assess challenges, including complex medical cases. The Medical Review Panel has the right to confirm the karyotype of any individual who wishes to compete in the Female Category. Individuals with any karyotype may petition for inclusion in the Female Category. Only individuals who meet the criteria in the "Female Category" defined above will be deemed eligible to compete in the Female Category at USA Climbing sanctioned events. Only USA Climbing shall have the right to contest the individual's Female Category status.

### **Confidentiality:**

All information provided to USA Climbing under this Policy will be dealt with in strict confidence and under applicable privacy laws. Such information will not be used for any purpose not contemplated in this Policy. It will not be disclosed to any third party unless that disclosure is necessary for the effective application and enforcement of this Policy or is required by law. USA Climbing shall not publicly comment on individuals or decisions under this Policy except, in its discretion, it may do so in response to public comments attributed to the individual or the individual's representatives.

### **Compliance with Anti-Doping Rules:**

Nothing in this Policy shall affect an individual's obligation to fully comply with the Anti-Doping Rules of the World Anti-Doping Agency ("WADA"), the United States Anti-Doping Agency ("USADA"), the International Testing Agency, the USOPC, the IFSC, or USA Climbing. If the use of a substance on WADA's Prohibited List is contemplated in connection with a gender transition, then the individual must first obtain a Therapeutic Use Exemption from USADA before that substance is used.

### **Other Eligibility Requirements Not Affected:**

The application of this Policy shall not affect eligibility requirements or rules otherwise set out in USA Climbing's rules, regulations, and policies.

### **Member Agreement, Consent, and Release:**

All individuals subject to this Policy represent and agree that:

- a. All information submitted concerning their membership application or event registration is accurate and complete to the best of their knowledge, and no relevant information has been intentionally withheld.
- b. The individual will fully cooperate with and provide any additional information reasonably requested by USA Climbing in the administration of this Policy.
- c. Neither USA Climbing nor any USA Climbing employees, directors, officers, agents, representatives, or other persons involved in the administration of this Policy shall be liable in any way in relation to acts done or omitted to be done in good faith in connection with the administration of this Policy.

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### Policy Effective Date:

This Policy takes effect December 17, 2025. After that date, the requirements outlined in this Policy shall be fully applicable without regard to an individual's status under any prior USA Climbing or IFSC policy. USA Climbing reserves the right to update this Policy with immediate effect at any time.

### Medical Review Panel

The Medical Review Panel (MRP) shall be an independent body comprised of three to five medical doctors with expertise in endocrinology, or other related fields. Only the MRP has the authority to review questions of and determinations on an individual's ability to participate in the Female Category. The determination of the MRP is final.

### Process for Review of Competition Eligibility

The Grievance Process does not apply to this policy. Only USA Climbing may challenge a competitor's eligibility, and in doing so, the Competition Eligibility Review Process will be applied when assessing a competitor's eligibility under this Policy only. USA Climbing members do not have standing to directly challenge another competitor's eligibility and only USA Climbing members in good standing may file a petition to USA Climbing. The full Competition Eligibility Review Process can be found [here](#).

Petitions must be made in good faith, and present credible, relevant evidence supporting the claims made in the petition. Unsupported allegations, speculative claims, or claims made as retaliation or for unfair advantage will not be considered. Petitioners must maintain confidentiality throughout the process. Frivolous, discriminatory, malicious, or bad-faith accusations are strictly prohibited and will be reviewed under the USA Climbing's Code of Conduct or applicable policies. Likewise, public accusations of competition eligibility are prohibited and will be interpreted as a violation of the USA Climbing Code of Conduct.

Petitions found to be in violation of this Policy may result in disciplinary action against the petitioner, up to and including suspension of membership or other sanctions under USA Climbing's Code of Conduct or applicable policies.

The review and determination of an individual's sex may only be conducted by the Medical Review Panel. The Competition Eligibility Review Process can be found [here](#).

## Questions

Any questions regarding this Policy may be directed to USA Climbing at [info@usaclimbing.org](mailto:info@usaclimbing.org).

## External References

External references below can be found [here](#).

- USA Climbing Rulebook
- USA Climbing Codes of Conduct
- USA Climbing Policies
- USA Climbing Grievance Policy
- US Center for SafeSport Code and applicable state or federal law

## Terminology

See the USA Climbing rules and regulations.

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## Approvals / Dates

<b>Approved</b>	USA Climbing Board of Directors 2025-10-25
<b>Effective</b>	2025-12-17
<b>Review</b>	Yearly

## Revision History

<b>Date/Version</b>	<b>Changes</b>
20251025	Initial version