

Section I: USA Gymnastics Membership Requirements

New additions are highlighted

I. Athlete Membership

All athletes appearing in a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event must be pre-registered athlete members of USA Gymnastics. They must be able to provide, or have their coach provide, a valid registration number assigned by USA Gymnastics Member Services. There will be no exceptions under any circumstances.

- A. Athlete membership is effective only once a USA Gymnastics athlete member number has been assigned to the competitive athlete and communicated to the coach or club by the USA Gymnastics Member Services Department. Athlete membership is required prior to any gymnast taking part in a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event.
- B. Athlete member numbers are assigned only after the processing of:
 - 1. Payment of \$52 per athlete (\$47 if done online at www.usa-gymnastics.org).
 - 2. Athlete Member Application form must be fully completed with all required information and signatures.
- C. Member benefits are paid out upon receipt of an athlete's application. Therefore, membership fees are NON-REFUNDABLE and NON-TRANSFERABLE.
- D. Team membership season begins each August 1, and runs through July 31, of the following year. Members joining at any time during the season will receive benefits for the remainder of the season. All team memberships are automatically null and void each July 31.
- E. Foreign athletes, coaches and judges participating in USA Gymnastics foreign sanctioned events must be registered members of USA Gymnastics. USA Gymnastics Member Services will supply the discounted insurance-only membership available strictly for foreign participants competing in USA meets at the rate of \$25. Foreign athletes do NOT enjoy other benefits of athlete membership other than the required insurance coverage.
- F. Athlete members should always carry their membership card when participating in a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event.

II. To Initiate Athlete Membership

- A. Athlete member registration information is sent before July 31 to all clubs who registered athletes the previous season.
- B. All other clubs may obtain registration packets by calling (800) 345-4719, after June 1.
- C. Each year's materials are dated for use during the current season only. Outdated membership materials will not be accepted.
- D. All gymnasts should register with the mailing address at which they want to receive their magazine. State and regional rebates will be based on club address, not athlete address.
- E. Athlete membership is effective once a USA Gymnastics athlete member number has been assigned to the gymnast and communicated to the coach or club by the USA gymnastics Member Services Department or obtained through online verification.
- F. Each athlete member receives a USA Gymnastics athlete member card showing his club number, athlete member number, and expiration date. Each athlete member also receives a subscription to USA Gymnastics magazine for the remaining term of his membership, and the insurance coverage offered as part of this membership program.
- G. Fees and application materials must be sent to the proper address shown on the Athlete Membership Application form and in the Athlete Member Representative Handbook. Allow three to four weeks for processing of athlete member applications. Forms requiring "Rush" processing should include a \$25 rush-processing fee. If more than five applications are sent together, the rush processing fee is \$100.
- H. Insurance related questions should be directed to "USA Gymnast Insurance Agency". Go to the Member Services web page to find answers to insurance related questions.

Position Statement on Banned Substances, Drugs and Doping Control *

USA Gymnastics agrees that drugs and alcohol have no place in sports. We support the philosophies of the IOC, FIG, and USOC in trying to rid sports and society of harmful drugs and we agree to follow all rules and regulations set forth by these agencies of sport to accomplish that end. We also acknowledge that our athletes, as well as our coaches, officials, employees, administrators and agencies must support a drug and alcohol free sports environment and ethically and morally endorse these principles in the best interest of our sport, our federation and the athletes we serve.

* This is an excerpt. For a copy of the complete Position Statement, please contact USA Gymnastics.

III. Professional Membership

- A. Professional membership and USA Gymnastics safety certification and background screening are required for all coaches and judges who participate on the floor of a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event. Professional membership is open to any coach, judge or other gymnastics professional and includes many information benefits. The minimum age for professional members is 18.
- B. A Junior professional membership is available for those who have reached the age of 16 and 17; however, upon turning 18, the membership must be upgraded to a Professional Membership. The cost for this membership is \$60.
- C. USA Gymnastics safety certification class must be taken prior to obtaining a professional junior or professional membership. For more information, you can contact the USA Gymnastics Member Services at 800 / 345-4719. Please refer to a Technique magazine for the most current dates and locations of safety certification classes. Safety certification courses are also available online.
- D. USA Gymnastics background screening is also a requirement of professional membership. Please visit the Member Services page at usa-gymnastics.org for more information.
- E. A Professional member must hold a professional membership that includes the discipline(s) in which he or she is participating.
 - 1. Women's professional membership is required to participate in Women's events.
 - 2. Men's professional membership is required to participate in Men's events.
 - 3. Rhythmic professional membership is required to participate in Rhythmic events.
 - 4. Trampoline and Tumbling professional membership is required to participate in Tumbling and Trampoline Events.
 - 5. Acrobatic Gymnastics professional membership is required to participate in Acrobatic Gymnastics events.
 - 6. Group gymnastics professional membership is required to participate in Group Gymnastics events.
- F. The annual fee for professional membership in one discipline is \$88 (\$83 if done online at www.usa-gymnastics.org). Each additional discipline added to the professional membership is \$15. Therefore, a combined professional membership with two disciplines (e.g. Men's and Women's) costs \$103, a professional membership for three disciplines costs \$118, and a professional membership for four disciplines costs \$133. Rush processing fee is \$25. Please see membership form for more details.
- G. Professional memberships are payable either by check (made payable to USA Gymnastics), or by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express). Renew online at usa-gymnastics.org or call 800 / 345-4719 to have an application sent to you or to apply over the phone. You may fax your application with a credit card number to 1-317- 692-5212.
- H. Professional memberships are valid for one (1) year from issue date. Renewal notices are sent to each professional member approximately 45 days prior to the renewal date.
- I. Professional memberships are valid only after the applicant has received online verification, a professional member card indicating member number and new expiration date, or has received confirmation of current membership from the USA Gymnastics Member Services Department. A professional membership that has merely been applied for or is in the state of being processed is NOT VALID.

- J. Professional members should always carry their card when participating in USA Gymnastics sanctioned events.
- K. USA Gymnastics reserves the right to revoke or suspend membership for any reason consistent with its purposes. See the following Membership Statement for further information.

Membership Statement

Membership in USA Gymnastics is a privilege granted by USA Gymnastics. This privilege can be withdrawn by USA Gymnastics if, at any time, a member's conduct is determined to be inconsistent with the best interest of the sport of gymnastics and of the athletes we are servicing.

Any individual who has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to a criminal charge or indictment involving sexual misconduct, child abuse or conduct violating a law specifically designed to protect minors, shall not be eligible to become or continue as a professional member of USA Gymnastics.

This policy is not intended to and does not limit USA Gymnastics' right to withhold, suspend or terminate membership in USA Gymnastics for any other conduct inconsistent with the best interest of the sport and its athletes. In response to misconduct by a member (other than as listed above), USA Gymnastics may:

1. Issue a warning or reprimand
2. Order restitution, if appropriate
3. Place a member on probation
4. Suspend membership
5. Terminate membership

Any individual whose membership with USA Gymnastics has been suspended or terminated may not participate in USA Gymnastics sanctioned programs or events.

IV. Code of Ethics

Note: This code was approved by the USA Gymnastics Board of Directors at the December 1994, meeting in Indianapolis and appears in its original format.

I. Introduction

The mission of USA Gymnastics is to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of gymnastics. USA Gymnastics grants the privilege of membership to individuals and organizations committed to that mission. The privilege of membership may, therefore, be withdrawn by USA Gymnastics at any time where USA Gymnastics determines that a member's conduct is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it.

In order to assist all members to better serve the interests of those who participate in gymnastics, USA Gymnastics has adopted the Ethical Code, which follows. This Code is not intended to establish a set of rules that will, by inclusion or exclusion, prescribe the appropriate behavior for USA Gymnastics' members in every aspect of their participation in the sport. Rather, the Code offers general principles to guide the conduct and the judicious appraisal of conduct, of all USA Gymnastics' members (including employees and agents of USA Gymnastics) in situations that have ethical implications.

This Code cannot further ethical conduct in the sport of gymnastics; that can only come from the personal commitment of the participants in the sport to behave ethically. This Code is offered instead to guide and to affirm the will of all of USA Gymnastics' members to safeguard the best interests of the sport by acting ethically at all times.

II. Elements of the Code

A. Participant Relationships

Members of USA Gymnastics are charged with the responsibility for 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 a special obligation to make decisions based on the best interest of the athlete. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Fail to follow the safety guidelines established by USA Gymnastics or otherwise knowingly subject a participant to unreasonable physical or emotional risk.
2. Engage in conduct that is unfair including, in particular, attempting to injure, disable, or intentionally interfere with the preparation of a competitor.
3. Engage in conduct toward another participant in the sport that is abusive. USA Gymnastics recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes will vary with each coach and each athlete, but it is nevertheless incumbent on everyone involved in the sport to support the development and use of motivational and training methods which avoid conduct which is, or is likely to be perceived as being, abusive.
4. Discriminate in the provision of resources or opportunities to any member or prospective member on the basis of race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin or mental or physical disability.
5. Attempt to intimidate, embarrass or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging or administering a competition.
6. Engage in business practices directed toward another member that are determined by a court or other similar adjudicatory body to be unethical, illegal or a breach of contract.

B. Participation

Any USA Gymnastics' 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 Gymnastics' activity or event has an obligation to participate to the best of their abilities. It is inconsistent with this obligation 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 individual or because of that member's race, sex, 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 judge, coach or athlete is inadequately prepared, unable to participate or fails to participate to the best of his or her ability.
3. Engage in behavior that is so disorderly or inappropriate as to interfere with the orderly conduct of the activity or other members' participation in, or enjoyment of, the activity.

C. Responsibility.

A member of USA Gymnastics has a responsibility to the sport of gymnastics and the rules and regulations that govern it. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Knowingly misrepresent the policies or actions of USA Gymnastics or its authorized representatives.
2. Fail to resort in the first instance to the established procedures for challenging a competitive result, contesting a team selection decision, complaining about the conduct of another member, or attempting to reverse a policy adopted by USA Gymnastics.

3. Breach the duty to maintain appropriately established confidences of USA Gymnastics or its members.

D. Communication

Members of USA Gymnastics have a duty to communicate honestly and openly with the organization and its members. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Misrepresent competitive achievements, professional qualifications, education, experience, eligibility, criminal record or affiliations.
2. Knowingly disseminate false or misleading information about another member.
3. Withhold from athlete members any information or resources likely to enhance the athletes' enjoyment of the sport or reduce their risk of injury or illness.
4. Fail to consult with or inform fully the athlete or the athlete's parents about opportunities made available to the athlete involving competitions, commercial activities or recognition.
5. Misrepresent the nature or extent of an injury in order to decline an invitation to participate in or withdraw from a competition assignment, training camp or other similar activity.
6. 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 other similar activity when such participation is inconsistent with the appropriate medical response to the injury.

E. Alcohol and Drug Abuse

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

1. Use or provide to a third party any drug proscribed by applicable federal, state or municipal law.
2. Assist or condone any competing athlete's use of a drug banned by the International Olympic Committee, United States Olympic Committee, Federation Internationale de Gymnastique, USA Gymnastics, or National Collegiate Athletic Association, or, in the case of athlete members, to use such drugs or refuse to submit to properly conducted drug tests administered by one of those organizations.
3. Provide alcohol to, or condone the use of alcohol by, minors, abuse alcohol in the presence of athlete members or at USA Gymnastics' activities or, in the case of athlete members, consume alcoholic beverages while a minor.

F. Criminal Conduct

Members of USA Gymnastics are expected to comply with all applicable criminal codes. This obligation is violated by any member who has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to a criminal charge or indictment involving sexual misconduct, child abuse, or conduct that is a violation of a law specifically designed to protect minors, and, depending on the nature of the crime, may be violated by any member who has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to any felony charge or indictment involving conduct other than that specifically described above.

G. Sexual Misconduct

Professional Members of USA Gymnastics must protect the integrity of the sport and the interests of the athletes they serve by avoiding sexual relationships with athletes except where the capacity and quality of the athlete's consent to enter that relationship is beyond question. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Solicit or engage in sexual relations with any minor.

2. 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.
3. Engage in sexual harassment by making unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

H. Professional and Athletic Development

Members of USA Gymnastics should strive to increase their level of proficiency and skill. To fulfill this obligation professional members should:

1. Participate in continuing education programs like the safety certification and professional development programs made available by USA Gymnastics.
2. Remain current on safety, health and training developments relevant to the sport and seek advice and counsel of colleagues and experts whenever such consultation is in the best interests of the athlete.

I. Conflict of Interest

Members of USA Gymnastics are responsible for avoiding both actual and perceived conflicts of interest in the conduct of business on behalf of the organization. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Use, or be perceived as using, USA Gymnastics' properties, services, opportunities, authority or influence to gain private benefit.
2. Fail, as an employee, director, officer or committee member of USA Gymnastics, to complete an annual Conflict of Interest Form, or fail to complete that form accurately.
3. Incur expenses in furtherance of USA Gymnastics' business which are unreasonable, unnecessary, or unsubstantiated.
4. Participate in the deliberation or decision making process about any issue for which the member has a direct financial interest.

III. Enforcement of Code

Compliance with this Code depends primarily upon understanding and voluntary compliance, secondarily upon reinforcement by peers, and, when necessary, upon enforcement through disciplinary action.

Any individual who believes that a member of USA Gymnastics has failed to meet his or her obligations under this Code is, under all but the most egregious circumstances, encouraged to first address that concern directly to that member. If that action does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the individual may file a written complaint with the President, program director or other appropriate staff member of USA Gymnastics. That complaint must be signed and must state specifically the nature of the alleged misconduct. Upon review of the complaint and, where appropriate, additional discussions with the complainant and/or member who is the subject of the complaint, the President may:

1. Determine that the complaint does not merit further action,
2. Counsel the member who is the subject of the complaint and record both the complaint and the nature of the counseling in the member's permanent record,
3. Refer the complaint, as appropriate, to the state or regional chairs/committees or affiliated organization, or
4. Process the complaint under the member misconduct or grievance procedures of USA Gymnastics' Bylaws.

