

## CHAPTER 1 - MEMBERSHIP

All participants in a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event must be pre-registered using the Meet Reservation system. Any participant who is unable to be verified as a current USA Gymnastics member will be ineligible to participate in any USA Gymnastics sanctioned event. In addition, any and all athletes who wish to compete at USA Gymnastics sanctioned events must be affiliated with a current USA Gymnastics Member Club. An athlete must be coached by a Competitive Coach of the same affiliated club, with the exception of an emergency situation (see page 23,IV.L.).

Current membership types and requirements for the 2021-2022 season can be found online [here](#).

### I. Athlete Membership

- A. Athlete membership is effective once a USA Gymnastics Athlete membership has been purchased for the current season.
- B. Athlete member numbers are effective only after:
  - 1. Athlete membership fee is paid.
  - 2. The online membership registration and/or membership application form is received fully completed with all required information and signatures.
  - 3. Athlete members 18 years old and older must complete the U110: U.S. Center for SafeSport Core Training. Athlete memberships will go into a pending status if this course is not complete 180 days after the athlete turns 18.
- C. Member benefits are paid out upon receipt of application; therefore, memberships are **nonrefundable** and nontransferable.
- D. The Athlete Membership is valid for one competitive year, from August 1 through the following July 31.
  - 1. Members joining at any time during the year will receive benefits for the remainder of the competitive year.
  - 2. All Athlete Memberships are automatically null and void each July 31.
- E. Membership forms are available online at [usagym.org/forms](http://usagym.org/forms). For more information regarding Athlete Membership terms, conditions, and registration, please contact Member Services at 800-345-4719 or via e-mail at [membership@usagym.org](mailto:membership@usagym.org).
- F. In order for an athlete to compete he/she must be affiliated with a member club of USA Gymnastics.

### II. Athlete Members Rights And Obligations

- A. ALL GYMNASTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:
  - 1. Compete in the meet if she has met all the requirements for eligibility (entry, score, and age requirements) and is properly entered.
  - 2. Use any of the facilities provided by the meet organizing committee.
  - 3. Use the services of any person connected officially with the meet (i.e. physician, trainer, music manager, etc.).
  - 4. In the case of a tie, expect her award to be mailed to her club address, free of charge, not later than one (1) month after the completion of the meet, if the award is not available at the meet.
  - 5. Expect courteous and respectful treatment from all participants and meet personnel.
  - 6. Expect that the competition site will provide a safe and adequate environment, allowing her to perform to the best of her ability.
- B. THE GYMNAST IS OBLIGATED TO:
  - 1. Obtain an Athlete membership from USA Gymnastics and be prepared to show her membership card at any USA Gymnastics-sanctioned event in which she participates.
  - 2. Be affiliated with a USA Gymnastics Member Club
  - 3. Follow the USA Gymnastics Code of Ethics.
  - 4. Adult athletes (18 or older) must complete the U.S. Center for SafeSport Core Course Training.
  - 5. Be competent at Levels 1 through 3 prior to participating in Level 4 meets.
  - 6. Be familiar with the rules of the meet and schedule of the meet events and lineup.
  - 7. Be present at the site of the meet for sufficient warm-up.
  - 8. Remain in the area of competition designated for gymnasts, as competitors or as observers.
  - 9. Obey warm-up regulations, rotation schedules and conform to the regulations of the meet.

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10. Present herself in the proper attire.
  - a. Allowable apparel for competition in both Development and Xcel programs:
    - 1) Sleeveless leotards
    - 2) Unitards with ankle length legs
    - 3) Ankle length tights: must be worn under the leotard (that match the leotard or are skin tone).
    - 4) Gymnastics footwear
      - Tennis shoes (athletic sneakers) are NOT considered gymnastics footwear.
    - 5) Shorts: must be solid black (small manufacturer's branding allowed) with no embellishments. Shorts must be worn over a leotard and the length must be above the knee or shorter.
  - b. A 0.20 deduction for "inappropriate" attire will be applied for any infraction.
    - 1) No bare midriffs.
    - 2) Backless leotards: Unless the open area is filled with mesh or flesh-colored fabric, a leotard is considered backless when the open area visually extends:
      - lower than 2 inches (approximately) below the bottom of the scapula (shoulder blade)
      - wider than the vertical midpoint of the scapula.
    - 3) Leotards with "spaghetti" straps
    - 4) T-shirts
    - 5) Boxer shorts
    - 6) Tennis shoes
  - c. No underwear (including sport bras) should be exposed.
    - A clear bra strap is acceptable.
  - d. The leg opening on competitive leotards must NOT be cut or rolled above the gymnast's hipbone.
  - e. Leotard and/or warm-up uniforms should be worn for march-in and award ceremonies.
  - f. Gymnasts must change clothes in the designated changing area or restroom. They may not appear in underwear on the competition floor or warm-up area before, during or after the competition.
  - g. At USA Gymnastics sanctioned events, a gymnast may NOT participate in warm-up or competition wearing a hard, non-removable cast.
11. Be well groomed in her appearance:
  - a. Clean attire.
  - b. Hair secured away from the face so as to not obscure her vision of the apparatus.
  - c. No jewelry, with the exception of stud earrings in the ear. All other piercing should be REMOVED, not just covered with tape or Band-Aids.
12. Accept the received score without criticism or comment.
13. Eat or drink outside of the competition area (exception; water bottles should be allowed, or a water fountain should be accessible in order for athletes to stay hydrated.)
14. Be courteous, respectful, and polite to all meet officials, coaches, hostesses, competitors and associated persons. The use of cell phones (talking, texting, etc.) or any type of wireless communication device is prohibited while on the field of play (competition area).
15. Exhibit self-control and calmness in the case of a fall or injury.
16. Be aware that infringement of obligations could lead to deduction and/or expulsion by the Jury of Appeals.
17. Flash her vault number at state level and above optional meets.

### III. Athlete Residency/Club's State Championships Determination

- A. The physical location of the gymnast's training facility determines the residency of the gymnast.
- B. If the gymnast resides in one state and her training facility is located in another neighboring state, the following regulations exist:
  1. A gymnast may compete in the State Championships based upon:
    - a. The state in which her training facility is physically located, OR
    - b. The state in which she actually resides.
  2. The gymnast may NOT compete in both State Championships.
  3. The gymnast must compete in the proper Regional meet, based upon the State Meet in which she competed.

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- C. A club **MUST** compete in the State Championship(s) of the state in which the training facility is physically located.
  - 1. Clubs that have gyms in different locations (under the same ownership) have the option of competing under one club name or as separate clubs. The decision must be made at the beginning of the competitive year and communicated to the State and/or Regional Administrative Committee Chairman, if appropriate.
  - 2. If two different clubs (different names/owners) are coached by the same person, the State Administrative Committee may decide if the clubs may compete as one combined team in USA Gymnastics qualifying meets and State Championships.

### MEMBERSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. For information regarding membership terms, conditions, and registration, please contact Member Services at 800-345-4719 or via e-mail at [membership@usagym.org](mailto:membership@usagym.org).
- B. Member benefits are paid out upon receipt of application; therefore, memberships are nonrefundable and nontransferable.
- C. Membership is valid for one competitive year, from August 1 through the following July 31.
  - 1. Members joining at any time during the year will receive benefits for the remainder of the competitive year.
  - 2. Memberships are automatically null and void each July 31.
- D. Information about the various certifications, programs, and accreditations for members is offered in the USA Gymnastics University is available online at: [usagymnasticsuniversity.org](http://usagymnasticsuniversity.org).
- E. Competitive Coach members coaching at sanctioned events must have a minimum certification level of instructor Certified in USA Gymnastics University. Instructor Certification can be achieved by completing the U100 Fundamentals of Gymnastics Instruction course.
- F. The following membership roles are permitted to be on the floor of a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event, so long as the member is in good standing and all membership requirements are complete:
  - o Competitive Coach
  - o Judge
  - o Meet Director
  - o Photographer/Videographer
  - o Medical
  - o Volunteer
  - o Athlete

### III. Competitive Coach Member Behavior Policy

- A. At USA Gymnastics Sanctioned Events, inappropriate coach behavior is defined as:
  - 1. Inappropriate remarks or comments, harassment, and/or gestures directed toward any official or meet personnel during the competition. No coach has the right to demand a last-minute change in the course of the meet or to jeopardize the athlete/competition in any way, unless there has been a violation of the *Rules and Policies*.
  - 2. Contact with other persons outside of the competitive floor area during the actual warm-up and course of competition. (Exceptions: USA Gymnastics or club doctor, trainer, other credentialed personnel)
  - 3. Derogatory remarks to the press in regard to USA Gymnastics, its designated representatives, meet officials or personnel.
  - 4. Violating any of the coaches' or judges' specific responsibilities as listed later in this chapter.
- B. This inappropriate behavior will be penalized as follows:
  - 1. First Offense: Verbal warning will be issued by the Meet Director in conjunction with the Meet Referee/Technical Director and/or designated representative of USA Gymnastics. The warning must be documented and recorded by the Meet Referee on the sanction report form.
  - 2. Second Offense: Withdrawal of floor credential, necessitating ejection from the competitive floor area (or possibly the entire competitive arena).
- C. At USA Gymnastics Sanctioned Events, UNACCEPTABLE coach behavior is defined as:
  - 1. Verbal, emotional, sexual, or physical abuse of a gymnast.
  - 2. Abuse of alcohol or drugs.

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- D. UNACCEPTABLE behavior will be penalized as follows:
1. Immediate ejection from the competition arena by the Meet Director in conjunction with the Meet Referee/Technical Director and/or designated representative of USA Gymnastics. The ejection must be documented and recorded by the Meet Referee on the sanction report form.
  2. The individual ejected will receive a sanction violation, as outlined in Chapter 3 – Sanctions.
  3. The Meet Director and/or any witnessing USA Gymnastics member must immediately report abuse to the local authorities and submit a Safe Sport Report to USA Gymnastics or the US Center for Safe Sport as required by his/her responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.
- E. Any falsification of official documentation (scores, athlete date of birth, athlete member number, etc.) will result in the removal of the athlete from competition and may result in disciplinary action against the responsible Professional member.

### IV. Coaches' Specific Responsibilities

All Coaches are obligated to:

- A. Maintain a USA Gymnastics Competitive Coach membership. [Click here](#) for all Competitive Coach membership requirements.
1. At sign-in at all USA Gymnastics-sanctioned events, all members must be prepared to produce their current membership card listing valid dates for membership and membership requirements or an event-specific credential (indicating that the Meet Director checked their memberships and pre-requisites prior to the competition). Members must also be prepared to show proof of valid membership in the field of play (competition area) if so requested.
  2. If upon renewing a membership, the member is unable to print a new membership card, a receipt to confirm that their membership and pre-requisites are up to date may be printed in lieu of the card. A temporary certificate for successfully completing the Safety/Risk Management certification, U100 and U110 Certifications/Training may also be printed as proof of compliance.
- B. Follow the USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct.
- C. Be professional
1. Display good sportsmanship.
  2. Dress in attire reflecting the best image of gymnastics. USA Gymnastics prohibits clothing that promotes drug or alcohol use, is vulgar, obscene or worn in a manner that draws attention away from the competitive environment. At State meets and above, the coaches' dress code is as follows:
    - a. Athletic shoes with rubberized soles. Athletic warm-up pants or "Dockers-style" pants (No jeans).
    - b. Athletic or tailored shorts that are of a reasonable length. No holes, tears or short shorts.
    - c. Collared shirts, business casual shirts or T-shirts with or without gym logo. (No spaghetti straps, low-cut or open back tops or midriff/undergarment revealing shirts).
    - d. No hats or visors.
  3. Be mentally and physically prepared and rested in order to provide the safest environment for the gymnast.
  4. The use of cell phones for verbal conversation in PROHIBITED while on the field of play (competition area). Coaches are permitted to record their OWN gymnasts' exercise for personal use but should not in any way interfere with the competition.
  5. At a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event, no e-cigarettes are allowed on the field of play.
  6. At a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event, no firearms or dangerous weapons are allowed on the field of play.
    - Weapons include, but are not limited to firearms, sling shots, sand clubs, metal knuckles, daggers, dirks, spring blade knives, nun-chu-ka sticks, throwing stars, air guns, stun guns, and devices intended to injure a person by an electric shock.
  7. For the safety of the athlete, at all USA Gymnastics sanctioned events, a coach may NOT actively spot or assist an athlete on a skill during warm-up or competition while wearing a cast or medical device that limits mobility in any way.
- D. Attend all coaches' meetings and be familiar with the meet set-up and organization.
- E. Be present at all warm-up and competition sessions. Check the time of floor exercise music on the official music playback equipment prior to competition and report any problems to the Meet Referee.
1. Must provide Floor exercise music in digital format (MP3, computer, tablet, smart phone, etc.).
  2. These electronic devices must have a display screen and must be on airplane mode, when applicable.
  3. Playing music via Bluetooth is not allowed.

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- F. Be respectful of and responsible for his/her athletes at all times during the travel to and from the competition, at the training prior to competition, during the off hours, and during the competition itself.
- G. Follow all guidelines for the competition as stated in the Women's Program *Rules and Policies*, including entry regulations.
- H. Continually update coaching knowledge and experience on a planned regular basis, by means of study, review of films, attending workshops, and participating in clinics, etc.
- I. Treat all competitions the same, regardless of the skill level.
- J. Set an example for the athletes by displaying a positive attitude and exemplary conduct.
- K. Show respect for all gymnasts, coaches, judges, and meet personnel.
- L. Coach gymnasts from their own team only, unless another coach asks for assistance or a gymnast has no coach available.
- M. Direct any inquires regarding apparatus, judging or meet schedules through the Meet Referee or Meet Director.
  - 1. Refrain from approaching a judge directly.
  - 2. Instruct their gymnasts and parents to discuss any concerns they may have with the coach.
- N. Inform the gymnasts and gymnasts' parents of all competitive requirements, as well as their rights and obligations.
- O. Obtain an Accident Report Form signed by the Meet Director and/or medical personnel in the case of any injury to a gymnast for whom they are responsible. Accident Report forms will be included in the Sanction packet sent to the Meet Director, who will duplicate and provide copies for the medical personnel. The coach or parent of the injured athlete must be sure to secure this form, completed by the medical personnel and signed by the Meet Director, prior to leaving the competition.
- P. At a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event, if any member of USA Gymnastics witnesses action by a coach and believes that the safety of an athlete is in question (for example: risk of catastrophic injury, concussion, etc.), that member should report the matter to the Meet Director.
  - 1. The Jury of Appeals will then promptly review and resolve any issue related to the matter by the following process:
    - a. Discussion
    - b. Decision by a majority vote
  - 2. A decision by the Jury of Appeals may include a warning to the coach for improper behavior or such other action as the Jury of Appeals determines to be warranted and may include action to ensure the safety of the athlete. A decision of the Jury of Appeals is final and binding and is not subject to appeal.
  - 3. The Jury of Appeals is comprised of the following individuals:
    - a. Meet Director (unless affiliated with the inquiry, for example, if question relates to his/her gymnast.
    - b. Meet Referee (President of the Jury)
    - c. Chief Judge of the Event in question
    - d. If available, one USA Gymnastics representative (Elected State or higher Committee member, or Regional or National officer.
  - 4. However, the Jury of Appeals for Regional and higher level competitions is comprised of the following:
    - a. Meet Director (unless affiliated with the inquiry)
    - b. Meet Referee (President of the Jury)
    - c. USA Gymnastics elected Administrative Officers

### V. Judges' Specific Responsibilities (see also Chapter 5: Meet Officials)

All Judges are obligated to:

- A. Maintain a USA Gymnastics Judge membership. [Click here](#) for all Judge membership requirements.
  - 1. At sign-in at all USA Gymnastics-sanctioned events, all members must be prepared to produce their current membership card listing-valid dates for membership and membership requirements or an event-specific credential (indicating that the Meet Director checked their memberships and pre-requisites prior to the competition). Members must also be prepared to show proof of *valid* membership in the field of play (competition area) if so requested.
  - 2. If upon renewing a membership, the member is unable to print a new Membership Card, a receipt to confirm that their membership and pre-requisites are up-to-date may be printed in lieu of the card. A temporary certificate for successfully completing the Safety/Risk Management certification may also be printed as proof of compliance.
- B. Maintain USA Gymnastics Judges' Accreditation ratings for the appropriate level of competition and be current with Continuing Professional Education (CPE) requirements.
- C. Follow the USA Gymnastics Code of Ethics.
- D. Be professional.
  - 1. Dress appropriately, regardless of the level of competition, in the required uniform.
    - Navy skirt/pants/**dress** and jacket/**sweater**, white blouse/shirt. Exception: theme invitationals.

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- Suit jackets are required for State meets and above.
  - Leggings are not acceptable attire to officiate a competition.
2. Be mentally and physically prepared and rested in order to evaluate all gymnasts as accurately as possible.
  3. Be quick, cooperative and efficient in resolving differences during a conference.
  4. Remain at their event station until the entire competition is completed.
  5. The use of cell phones (talking, texting, etc.) or any type of wireless communication device is prohibited while on the field of play (competition area). Judges may use electronic tablets for gymnastics purposes only on the Field of Play.
- E. Serve only in the capacity of an official during warm-ups and competition. They may not act in a dual capacity (i.e., coach/judge, parenting/judge, Meet Director/judge, Announcer/Judge, etc.).
  - F. Be familiar with the meet setup and organization. No judge has the right to demand a last-minute change in the course of the meet or to jeopardize the athlete/competition in any way unless there has been a violation of the *Rules and Policies*.
  - G. Fulfill all assignments according to the contractual agreement. Only dire circumstances should prohibit a judge from fulfilling an assignment. If a judge must cancel an assignment, she/he must notify the appropriate officials at the earliest possible moment.
  - H. Refrain from conversation with other judges and coaches during the competition. In addition, the judges' responsibility does not involve the conduct of the gymnast(s) during warm-up or training. Any conversation or comments with the athlete should be made only if requested by the coach or athlete.
  - I. Show respect for all gymnasts, coaches, judges, meet personnel and volunteers.
  - J. Be confidential about meet matters, their own scores or other judges' scores or opinions.
  - K. Update judging knowledge and experience on a planned, regular basis, which includes studying, practice judging with videos or live athletes, attending courses, and judging as much as possible.
  - L. Treat all competitions the same, regardless of skill level.
  - M. Avoid judging a meet in which any personal bias (positive or negative) towards any competing team and/or individual athlete would affect their ability to judge objectively.
  - N. Set a good example for the athletes by displaying a positive attitude and exemplary conduct.
  - O. Be considerate of the Meet Director's equipment by refraining from wearing footwear that could be damaging to the mats and/or floor.
  - P. Refrain from soliciting invitations to judge specific competitions by making direct contact with the Meet Director.