




Safe Play

A guide for tournament directors
and organizers

● new.uschess.org/us-chess-safe-play-hub





*"US Chess is committed to
providing a safe environment
for all chess players."*

Safe Play is a comprehensive player safety program developed by US Chess consisting of education, screening, reporting tools, and policies for appropriate conduct in chess.

US Chess has zero tolerance for abuse and misconduct.



SafeSport vs. Safe Play

- [The U.S. Center for SafeSport \(SafeSport\)](#) is a Congressionally chartered organization dedicated exclusively to ending sexual, physical, and emotional abuse on behalf of athletes everywhere. It offers training and education resources to organizations outside the Olympic movement.
- [Safe Play](#) is the program established by US Chess to provide a safe environment for all chess players. The [Safe Play Policy](#) is the document that governs Safe Play procedures and implementation.
- US Chess has contracted with SafeSport to access their training modules. SafeSport has **no** jurisdiction over US Chess Safe Play Policy or how it is implemented.

Why is SafeSport Training Necessary?

SafeSport training is the *industry standard* for **organized sports**.

US Chess has instituted SafeSport training to achieve the same standard held by similar sports organizations. The industry standard is to require regularly safety training for all adults who interact with minors in their roles as organizer, coach, or authority figure. Tournament directors are often all three.

Benefits of SafeSport Training

SafeSport training:

- Arms TDs with a toolkit of responses on how to manage potential Safe Play situations
- Gives TDs resources that help explain their rights and responsibilities
- Outlines steps for reporting violations if needed
- Helps TDs identify and remove those who are acting inappropriately

Most importantly, it protects our players and helps keep our chess community safe.

Who is Required to Take SafeSport Training?

At National Events organized by US Chess:

- All US Chess certified tournament directors, regardless of level
- Any independent contractor or vendor hired by US Chess
- All US Chess employees and tournament staff
- Anyone with an official presence (committee members, guest grandmasters, customer-facing volunteers, etc.)

At US Chess National Bid-Out Events:

- All US Chess certified tournament directors, regardless of level
- All tournament staff and employees
- Anyone with an official presence (guest teachers, lecturers, customer-facing volunteers, etc.)
- Others at organizer's discretion

At US Chess Sanctioned/Rated Events:

- All US Chess certified tournament directors, regardless of level
- Others at organizer's discretion



Why TDs?

- TDs are on the front lines at tournaments. SafeSport trained TDs learn how to approach potentially difficult situations and may even be able to prevent them. TDs must be over age 13 to take the training.
- Any US Chess member can take SafeSport training! Organizers, volunteers, parents, spectators, coaches, and others can also benefit by understanding and learning to recognize signs of harassment or abuse.

It takes a **community** to **ensure safe** and welcoming spaces for all. Everyone benefits from SafeSport training!

Handling Safe Play Situations

- Ensure the victim feels safe. Separate them from alleged perpetrators while you investigate.
- Notify local law enforcement if mandated or warranted.
- Use your discretion when managing potential Safe Play situations.
 - TDs are empowered to remove, suspend, or ban disruptive players from their clubs and tournaments.
- Not all incidents must be escalated to US Chess.
 - Notify US Chess if a person could be a threat to others outside of your jurisdiction (club, state, region, etc.).
 - At events organized by US Chess, report incidents to your Chief TD, who will coordinate with Safe Play if needed.

Reminders

- Local and state decisions *do not* affect US Chess membership.
- US Chess becomes involved only if:
 - A *first party* complainant files a Safe Play report
 - An Ethics or other complaint, which can be *third party*, is filed with US Chess

Bullying vs. Rude, Mean, Conflict

Bullying

- Repeated and/or severe aggressive behavior between two or more people
- Intended or likely to hurt, control, or diminish another person emotionally, physically, or sexually
- Can occur between minors, between adults, and between minors and adults
- Based on the perception of the victim, bystanders, or witnesses, not the alleged perpetrator
- Can be:
 - a. Physical**
 - b. Verbal**
 - c. Social, including cyber-bullying**
 - d. Gender-based**

Rude, Mean, Conflict

- Rude, hurtful behavior that is inadvertent
- Arises out of conflict or struggle where no power imbalance is present
- Might not rise to the level of bullying behavior
- Alternatively labeled “unsportsmanlike”

For details, see

[Safe Play Policy, Section III, B](#)



Mandatory Reporting

- Mandatory reporting is required by law if child abuse or neglect is suspected or observed. All 50 states and the District of Columbia have state-specific laws delineating who must report and what must be reported. Find state-specific laws here: [Mandatory Reporting Guide](#)
- There is no liability for making a good faith report.

Safe Play Reporting

- TDs and other third parties cannot file a Safe Play report on behalf of a complainant. They can, however, notify US Chess of an incident through abuse@uschess.org and act as witnesses.
- If complainants choose to report to US Chess, provide them with their [reporting options](#).
- Use the Safe Play hub as a resource for [Mandatory Reporting](#) requirements if minors are involved.
- If appropriate, document the complaint for your records.

Options for Reporting to US Chess

Online:

[Safe Play Misconduct
Report Form](#)

Email:

abuse@uschess.org

Phone:

314.661.9500 extension 8

Complaints can be filed **anonymously**, but the extent of the investigation will be dependent on the level of **anonymity requested**.

Registered Sex Offenders

- Registered sex offenders cannot play in any tournament with minors ([Safe Play Policy, Section III. A. 3](#)).
- The burden is *on the offender* to relay their status to the organizer.
- Organizers and TDs are **not** responsible for identifying registered sex offenders, but they must exclude a registered sex offender if they know in advance that such an individual plans to attend an event.
- If an organizer or TD becomes aware after an event that such an individual was present, they may file a report via the abuse hotline (314-661-9500, extension 8), the online [reporting form](#), or by email to abuse@uschess.org.

Concerns



*TDs are trained to not interfere
and SafeSport training seems to
require the opposite.*

Concerns



*It's not fair that TDs have to pay
for SafeSport training.*

Myth

US Chess is making money by charging \$19 for the main course and \$9 for the refresher.

Fact

There is a negotiated cost associated with accessing SafeSport training modules. US Chess is not profiting from the fees charged to cover the cost of training.



Myth

If I take the SafeSport training, I will increase my liability.

Fact

Mandatory reporting laws have been in effect long before Safe Play was implemented. SafeSport training helps you **understand your obligations** and provides resources on what is required in each state. Burying your head in the sand doesn't reduce your liability.



Myth

I have to report everything to US Chess and to state law enforcement.

Fact

TDs are always empowered to handle situations immediately and at their own discretion. Many situations do not have to be escalated to US Chess. The Safe Play Policy and resources page help you assess your reporting requirements to determine the best course of action.



SafeSport Core Training Requirements

- SafeSport Core training must be completed by [June 1, 2024](#). TDs who have not completed their training by this date will have their certification changed to **inactive**.
- SafeSport Core training is required as part of TD certification for all new TDs.

Cost: \$19 with coupon code **FSCheSSDisSST1972723**

Here's how to [access the core course](#). When you set up your profile, be sure to:

- Use your US Chess member ID number for the Organization ID.
- If you are not a US Chess member, use 14909176112 as your member ID number
- Input "US Chess" as the sport (just "Chess" will not link the ID properly)



SafeSport Refresher Training

- Required annually to maintain TD certification.
- Must be completed by the one-year anniversary of the previous training completion date, with a 30-day grace period. (For example, if you completed your Core training on March 1, 2024, your Refresher 1 course will need to be completed by March 31, 2025.)
- TD certification will be changed to inactive if deadlines are not met.

Cost: \$9 annually with coupon code **FSCheSSDisR1972723**

Instructions on how to [access Refresher 1](#).



SafeSport Deadline!

SafeSport Core training **must be completed** by [June 1, 2024](#).

If you have not completed your training by this date, your TD certification will be changed to **inactive and you will be unable to submit ratings reports.**

After June 1st

Validation Report	2024-05-02 23:29:39
Version	2.08a
Status	1 errors, 0 warnings, 2 alerts
Event ID	202405011582
Name	SAFESPORT TESTING
File Name	safesport
Event Date	2024-05-01
*Alert	Tournament Directors (TDs): You must complete the core training from the US Center for SafeSport by June 1, 2024, to become or remain certified by US Chess. Questions? Contact Safe Play Manager Melinda Matthews at mmatthews@uschess.org .
*Alert	For more information on SafeSport, see https://new.uschess.org/us-chess-safe-play-hub .
Affiliate ID	A5028582
Chief TD	US CHESS FEDERATION 10339324
***Error	MICHAEL E NOLAN SafeSport certification lapsed on 2024-04-01 and needs to be renewed
City	Chief TD not SafeSport Certified
State	LINCOLN
ZIP	NE
TLA	68512
Total Ratable Games	None
Rating Fee	6
	\$3.00



After June 1st

Missing Demographics Report:

Players (IDs) 4

Section 1

Section Name TEST

Section Date 2024-05-01

Section Chief TD 10339324

MICHAEL E NOLAN SafeSport certification lapsed on 2024-04-01 and needs to be renewed

Rounds 3

Players 4

Ratable Games 6

Time Control G/90;d5

Rating System Regular Rated Only

Participant Coding Adult/Open (Non-Scholastic) Event

Section Type Swiss

Error Recap

*Alert Tournament Directors (TDs): You must complete the core training from the US Center for SafeSport by June 1, 2024, to become or remain certified by US Chess. Questions? Contact Safe Play Manager Melinda Matthews at mmatthews@uschess.org.

*Alert For more information on SafeSport, see <https://new.uschess.org/us-chess-safe-play-hub>.

***Error Chief TD not SafeSport Certified

See https://secure2.uschess.org/TD_Affil/whatnext.php for information on how to correct Errors, Warnings and Alerts.

email report to: htfoot@gmail.com

Elapsed Time: 1.4609701633453



After Completing SafeSport Training

- **Check your SafeSport dashboard. Make sure:**
 1. You have used the same email address for both SafeSport and US Chess
 2. Your US Chess member ID number is correct
 3. Your sport is “US Chess” (NOT “Chess”)
- If everything is correct, you are done! US Chess is automatically notified. You **do not need** to send in your certificate or inform US Chess that you have completed training.
- Your completion verification and training expiration date should appear on your US Chess dashboard within two weeks. If your information is missing after two weeks, contact [Melinda Matthews](#).
- The [SafeSport Trained TDs database](#) is updated every Monday.

US Chess Resources

- [Safe Play Policy](#)
- [SafeSport Core training sign-up instructions](#)
- [SafeSport Refresher training instructions](#)
- [Reporting to US Chess](#)

Find all of these resources and more at the US Chess [Safe Play hub](#).

Other Resources

- [Mandatory Reporting by State](#)
- [U.S. Center for SafeSport](#)
- [National Safe Place](#)
- [RAINN](#)
- [CDC](#)
- 24-hour National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

For more information on Safe Play, visit
the [Safe Play hub](#) or
contact Safe Play Manager
Melinda Matthews at
mmatthews@uschess.org.



Questions?



new.uschess.org

