

***For the 2025-26 Season***

In addition to the U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook and U.S. Figure Skating policies, these Officials Standards of Professionalism apply to all U.S. Figure Skating officials in activities hosted, supported, sponsored, or engaged in by U.S. Figure Skating or Learn to Skate USA® including but not limited to competitions, test sessions, feedback sessions, training camps, and officials training programs.

**These Standards of Professionalism outline five specific areas of expectations for U.S. Figure Skating officials. The overriding principles of Athlete Centered and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are integrated into each area, thereby creating an environment where all skaters/teams will be evaluated with respect and fairness, irrespective of their backgrounds.**

**Excellence:** Highest standards in all officiating endeavors.

- Officials will perform the duties of their roles as required in rules 1200-1295 in the U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook.
- Officials must have a satisfactory standard of eyesight, hearing, and general physical condition in order to perform their duties.
- Officials will stay current on all technical and judging rules and information necessary to perform their duties.
- Officials will apply the rules accurately and consistently to each skater's/team's performance.
- Officials will participate in continuing education opportunities and complete any continuing education requirements each season.
- Officials will take an athlete-centered approach in any communication with athletes through written comments or feedback sessions, considering the ability, age, resources, and experience of the athlete.
- Officials will be cognizant of their actions and maintain a high level of professionalism and self-awareness when having interactions with other U.S. Figure Skating members and participants.

**Integrity:** Honesty and openness in all we do.

- Officials will conduct themselves with exemplary ethical and moral standards, ensuring that their actions and interactions with individuals reflect a commitment to fairness and equal opportunity for all participants.
- Officials will abide by and be compliant with all U.S. Figure Skating requirements, the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, state and local laws, and other applicable regulatory organizations and their policies.
- Officials will disclose any known conflicts of interest to the appropriate persons (chief referee, local organizing committee, test chair, etc.) as soon as they are known to exist or to have the potential to exist.

- Officials will be truthful, accurate, clear, and honest concerning their qualifications and must only serve where qualified by the rules. If an assignment is made in error, officials will notify the appropriate person(s) (chief referee, local organizing committee, test chair, etc.) as soon as the error is known.

**Respect:** We value each other's voices, contributions and well-being.

- Officials will actively engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds, treating all participants with equal consideration and dignity, and fostering an environment where everyone is valued and respected.
- Officials will treat all participants with equal consideration regardless of age, athletic potential, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religion or spiritual affiliation, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or any other status protected by federal, state or local law. Officials will not participate in and will responsibly report any unjust discrimination in the sport, and act to prevent or correct practices that are discriminatory.
- Officials will respect the confidentiality of information shared with them (when that information is not required by U.S. Figure Skating or by law to be reported).
- Officials will be polite in all interactions with local organizing committees/host clubs, coaches, athletes, staff and other participants.
- Officials will be mindful of how their behaviors, comments (written and verbal) and actions affect the health and safety of other participants, including: athletes, other officials, coaches and parents, and actively work to address any barriers in promoting equality and inclusion.

**Resilience:** We get up and adapt to challenges on and off the ice.

- Officials will respond and adapt to unexpected challenges or changes in a professional manner.
- Officials will recognize the signs of injury, physical, and psychological stress in themselves and athletes, take these indicators seriously, and refer or seek out appropriate and qualified support. Officials will not advise others to go against the advice of a medical professional.

**Community:** Nurturing connections through the skating community.

- Officials will actively support U.S. Figure Skating in promoting a safe environment for its diverse member base that is free of misconduct and harassment, by fostering connections among officials, coaches, and athletes while advocating for a welcoming and inclusive environment for all participants.
- Officials will strive to instill a culture of trust, respect, transparency and objectivity among officials, coaches and athletes through their behaviors, comments and actions.
- Officials will develop and promote a spirit of cooperation and sportsmanship among their peers and others in the sport.
- Officials will be cognizant that they represent U.S. Figure Skating during both in-person and virtual interactions. Officials will be thoughtful of all statements and conversations, and

avoid demeaning references to athletes, peers, officials, volunteers, and others involved in the sport.

Failure to adhere to these Officials Standards of Professionalism may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the suspension or revocation of an appointment(s) as a U.S. Figure Skating official. Violations of these Officials Standards of Professionalism may be reported to [skatesafe@usfigureskating.org](mailto:skatesafe@usfigureskating.org) or online [here](#).

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## ***Appendix A: Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy for Officials***

### **Scope and Modification**

Officials subject to this policy include members delineated in rule DOR 1.00.  
U.S. Figure Skating reserves the right to modify this policy at any time.

### **General Rules and the Officials Creed Standard of Conduct**

The Policy outlined in rule GR 1.00 and the Officials Creed Standard of Conduct outlined in rule DOR 2.00 are established for the guidance of all officials.

Additionally, officials must comply with the bylaws, rules, standards, codes and policies of U.S. Figure Skating as delineated in rule DOR 2.03.

### **Conflict of Interest – All Officials**

A conflict of interest exists when I (or my parent, sibling, child, spouse, skating and/or life partner) have accepted any payment during the past 12 months for teaching/coaching/consulting for a test candidate/competitor.

An indirect conflict of interest through any personal or financial relationship could be perceived as a conflict of interest.

Additional conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Teaching/coaching/consulting for test candidates/competitors, either privately or semi-privately (including e-classes), in but not limited to choreography, ballet, gymnastics, ballroom dancing, and/or physical fitness within the past 12 months.
- Conducting a seminar for which payment was given within the past 12 months.
  - For 12 months, the names of all seminar participants must be disclosed as conflicts of interest.
- Commercial ventures in but not limited to sharpening skates, selling boots and/or blades, designing and/or making costumes, or providing financial support to athletes within the past 12 months.
- Being the relative of a test candidate/competitor or being a relative of the coach.
- Officiating events in divisions in which I may be competing later in the same season.
- Skating as a partner and/or being a teammate of a test candidate/competitor within the past 12 months.

- Serving as a team manager of a synchronized skating team within the past 12 months.

Officials may employ coaches for lessons for themselves or their family members. This does not create a conflict for the official to evaluate other students of the coach.

Officials may accept nominal gifts/honorariums that meet applicable Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations for activities such as feedback, monitoring, Coach Connect, etc.

For qualifying events (including National Qualifying Series events at nonqualifying competitions), I will not participate in the entirety of any event in which I have a conflict of interest in any portion of the event.

- (i.e., a conflict in intermediate women free skate group A would prohibit an official from officiating in any other intermediate women's groups and/or final rounds at that respective competition.)

I will disclose all conflicts of interest to the LOC when accepting an invitation to officiate at a nonqualifying competition. If a conflict is discovered after the invitation has been accepted, I will notify the chief referee.

I will disclose all conflicts of interest when submitting my availability to officiate at qualifying competitions.

If a conflict is discovered after the invitation has been accepted, I will notify the chair of Domestic Selections.

If I discover a conflict of interest while at any competition, I will notify the chief referee.

I will disclose all conflicts of interest to the test chair when accepting an invitation to officiate at a test session.

If a conflict is discovered after the invitation has been accepted, I will notify the test chair.

If I discover a conflict of interest while at a test session, I will notify the test chair and the judge-in-charge. If those individuals do not agree if a conflict of interest exists, the judge-in-charge will make the final decision.

<b>Conflict of Interest – Judge, Referee, Technical Controller and/or Accountant</b>
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I will not officiate as a judge, referee, technical controller and/or accountant in any U.S. Figure Skating sanctioned events if I am teaching/coaching/consulting figure skating.

See rule DOR 5.03 for exceptions regarding:

- learn-to-skate or Learn to Skate USA group lessons; and

- full-time undergraduate and graduate college students enrolled in the Coach and Judge Program.

#### **Conflict of Interest – Coach Certified as a Test Judge**

Per rule DOR 5.03, coaches who are also certified as test judges:

- may only serve as a one-judge minority of a three-judge panel; and
- cannot serve as a single-judge panel; and
- cannot judge competitions with the exception of Compete USA competitions.

#### **U.S. Championships – Technical Panel Officials**

U.S. Figure Skating Championships  
 U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships  
 U.S. Collegiate Figure Skating Championships  
 U.S. Adult Figure Skating Championships

- Assigned technical panel officials are not allowed to serve as a coach for any event.
- Assigned members of the technical panel may only serve as an official.

#### **Feedback/Monitoring/Coach Connect – All Officials**

##### **Feedback**

If feedback is requested from an official, which is NOT linked to a recent competition and/or test session in which the official had officiated on the skater's/team's events and/or tests, then the below embargo periods apply for future events.

##### **Feedback Embargo Periods for Officials**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Officials</b>
Test (in-person and virtual)	15 days prior to the start date of the test session
Nonqualifying	15 days prior to the start date of the competition
Qualifying (including NQS events)	30 days prior to the start date of the competition
Championship	30 days prior to the start date of the competition

- The embargo periods only apply within the respective discipline.

- For example, a judge may give feedback to a synchronized skating team and then judge the singles/pairs/dance test of a member of that synchronized skating team within the 15 day embargo period.
- See National Qualifying Series Handbook regarding feedback for National Qualifying Series events.
- See Virtual Test Guidelines document regarding judge guidelines for virtual tests.
- Any questions regarding technical levels must be directed to the technical controller of the event.
  - Unless requested by the technical controller, it is unacceptable for any other member of the technical panel to provide this feedback.
- Feedback can be given after any event segment at nonqualifying competitions (excluding National Qualifying Series events at nonqualifying competitions) if the feedback is available to all skaters/teams in that event (even if the feedback requires additional fees).
  - If feedback is not available to all skaters/teams, it is not appropriate for a judge nor the technical controller (nor his/her designee) to give feedback, until all event segments have concluded.
- If an official will be officiating at future competitions where embargo periods have already begun, officials must limit feedback to the particular performance and should not advise on how skaters/teams might make refinements/improvements.

### **Monitoring**

Evaluation for International Selection Pool (ISP) consideration or general international readiness.

- Officials may monitor (including correspondence and/or video review) skaters/teams despite the aforementioned feedback embargo periods, if the monitoring is requested by the Senior Director, Athlete High Performance or the International Committee or any of its subcommittees.

### **Coach Connect**

An invitation-only program managed by U.S. Figure Skating pairing coaches with officials for mentoring.

- Officials may participate in Coach Connect (including correspondence and/or video review) despite the aforementioned feedback embargo periods. This special allowance includes National Qualifying Series events.



- However, the feedback embargo periods WILL apply for the sectional singles finals/U.S. Pairs Final/U.S. Ice Dance Final/synchronized skating sectional championships/U.S. Figure Skating Championships/U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships.

#### **Officials as Paid Employees of U.S. Figure Skating**

Officials may be paid employees of U.S. Figure Skating. However, any paid employee of U.S. Figure Skating who has direct or indirect responsibilities for the direction, selection, and/or management of athletes is prohibited from officiating.

#### **Reporting**

Where can I report a violation?

- <https://www.usfigureskating.org/skatesafe>
- Click on “Report A Concern To U.S. Figure Skating” to access the i-sight online reporting form.

If filing an anonymous complaint, please ensure all relevant information is included in the report as the recipient of the report will not have your contact information to ask additional questions.



## **Appendix B: Social Media Policy for Officials**

### **Scope and Modification**

Officials subject to this policy include members delineated in rule DOR 1.00.  
U.S. Figure Skating reserves the right to modify this policy at any time.

### **General Rules and the Officials Creed Standard of Conduct**

The policy outlined in rule GR 1.00 and the Officials Creed Standard of Conduct outlined in rule DOR 2.00 are established for the guidance of all officials.

Additionally, officials must comply with the bylaws, rules, standards, codes and policies of U.S. Figure Skating as delineated in rule DOR 2.03.

### **Policy – All Officials**

- 1) I understand that per U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe Handbook, Adult Participants, including Officials, are prohibited from being friends with or following Minor Athletes on social media.
  - a) Additionally, I understand that it is not recommended for Adult Participants to join a personal social media page of Adult Athletes and vice versa.
- 2) I will not comment and/or react on the social media post of a skater/team that I am going to officiate for in the current competitive season.
- 3) I will not comment about officials, skaters/teams, coaches, parents of skaters, club representatives, volunteers, or any related personnel, including employees of U.S. Figure Skating or other such decisions made by U.S. Figure Skating.
- 4) I will not engage in negative, critical, or unprofessional commentary or speculation on any specific evaluation, result, competition, or test session.
- 5) I will not post articles, pictures, and/or videos of skaters/teams.
- 6) I understand that communication among officials for learning purposes should not be done through the use of social media.
- 7) I understand that my failure to abide by this Social Media Policy for Officials may result in my suspension, or may forever exclude me, from all U.S. Figure Skating activities.

### **Reporting**

Where can I report a violation?

- <https://www.usfigureskating.org/skatesafe>
- Click on "Report A Concern To U.S. Figure Skating" to access the i-sight online reporting form.

If filing an anonymous complaint, please ensure all relevant information is included in the report as the recipient of the report will not have your contact information to ask additional questions.

## ***Social Media Policy for Officials - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)***

### **Interacting with Skaters/Teams**

Q: Is it acceptable to be friends with or follow skaters/teams on social media?

A: Per U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe Handbook, Adult Participants, including Officials, are prohibited from being friends with or following Minor Athletes on social media. It is not recommended for Adult Participants to join a personal social media page of Adult Athletes and vice versa.

### **Articles, Pictures, and/or Videos**

Q: Is it acceptable to share and/or post articles, pictures, and/or videos of skaters/teams?

A: No. This may give the impression that you are biased in support of a particular skater/team and that you would not be able to evaluate fairly.

Q: If I am assigned as a team leader or an official traveling/officiating internationally, is it acceptable for me to post pictures with the entire U.S. delegation?

A: Yes. Since you are focusing on the entire delegation, this is acceptable. However, we do not recommend posting pictures to your personal social media accounts of yourself with skaters/teams in social situations, unless it is an official event. You should not single out any particular skater/team to congratulate on social media nor post a picture with a particular skater/team.

Q: A skater has just passed a gold skating skills test. After the test session, the skater requests a picture with the judges. Is it acceptable to be in such a picture?

A: No. It is not appropriate to take a picture with a skater when you have just officiated for the skater whether it be at a test session or a competition.

Q: An official at a competition had taken great pictures of skaters/teams while they were competing. The official is planning to post the pictures on his/her personal social media with the intent to promote the competition and the sport of figure skating. Is this acceptable?

A: No. This is a violation of the Social Media Policy for Officials. Officials need to eliminate the appearance of impropriety. Additionally, this may give the impression that an official is biased in support of a particular skater/team and that the official would not be able to evaluate them fairly.

Q: May I post pictures of the officials in the hospitality room during competitions?

A: No. Do not post pictures of any individual who has not explicitly given permission for you to do so. Additionally, do not post pictures from dinners or social activities that include alcohol and/or unprofessional behaviors.

**Commenting**

Q: Is it acceptable to congratulate a local organizing committee (LOC) on a well-run competition on social media?

A: Yes.

Q: Is it acceptable for officials to complain/vent on social media about officiating assignments and/or invitations?

A: No. This is a violation of the Social Media Policy for Officials as officials are prohibited from engaging in negative, critical, or unprofessional commentary or speculation on any specific evaluation, result, competition, or test session.

Q: May I comment and/or react (i.e., “like, love, etc.”) to a post on a skater’s personal social media page and/or on a team’s official social media page?

A: No. You should never comment and/or react on the social media post of a skater/team whom you are going to officiate for in the current competitive season.

Additionally, you should not comment and/or react on a skater’s/team’s post (whether or not you are going to officiate for the skater/team in the current season) if it involves:

- any intimate/sexualized behavior or
- any videos showcasing particular elements.

Q: I am offended by a skater’s/team’s costume. Is it acceptable for me to comment on their personal appearance on social media?

A: No. The policy states officials are not to engage in negative, critical, or unprofessional commentary.

Q: I am an adult skater as well as an official. Is it acceptable for me to comment on the competitors in my same group at a competition?

A: No.

Additionally, adult skaters who are also officials must defer to the role as an official in all social media actions.

Q: Is it acceptable for me to post my opinion about the calls of the technical panel and/or scores of the judges on social media?

A: No. It is unacceptable to comment on the calls of the technical panel and/or scores of the judges on social media. It undermines your peers and is completely inappropriate.

Q: Is it acceptable for me to identify myself as an official and comment in a live stream chat (e.g., YouTube chat) while the live feed of a competition is being shown?

A: No. It is unacceptable to identify yourself as an official and provide commentary in a public forum.

**Miscellaneous**

Q: Is it acceptable to post an invitation to a personal group meeting (such as a prayer group) if the invitation is a general post which is directed to no one individual in particular?

A: Yes. Personal posts on social media, which do not reference your position within U.S. Figure Skating and which do not purport to express the opinions of U.S. Figure Skating, will not violate the Social Media Policy for Officials.

Q: If a news reporter contacts me via social media, should I respond?

A: Yes, but only to explain that you are not an official spokesperson of U.S. Figure Skating. You should refer the reporter to headquarters. (*U.S. Figure Skating has three official spokespersons: the president, chief executive officer, and director, media and digital strategy*).

Q: Can I promote my skating dress business on social media?

A: No. You cannot serve as an official and also promote skating related goods or services (see the Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy for Officials).

Q: An official discovers a great clip of a +5 element from a figure skating themed YouTube channel. Is it acceptable for the official to repost and share this clip on their personal social media for the purposes of learning and sharing information with other officials?

A: No. Communication among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through social media.

**Reporting**

Q: Where can I report a violation?

A: <https://www.usfigureskating.org/skatesafe>  
Click on "Report A Concern To U.S. Figure Skating" to access the i-sight online reporting form.

Q: If I file a complaint against an official who has posted something inappropriate on social media, can it be anonymous?

A: Yes. When filing an anonymous complaint, please ensure all relevant information (such as screenshots, whether the page is public or private, etc.) is included in the report as the recipient of the report will not have your contact information to ask additional questions.

**As an official, you represent U.S. Figure Skating at all times. Act accordingly.**