



U.S. CENTER FOR  
**SAFESPORT**

**SafeSport | US Sailing**

## **SafeSport Authorization Act Overview**

Dear US Sailing Members and Families,

Senate Bill 534 – the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 – was signed into law on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The bill imposes a duty on amateur sports organizations, including US Sailing and its members, to report suspected sex-abuse to local or federal law enforcement or to a child-welfare agency designated by the Justice Department, within 24 hours of learning of the misconduct. Failure to report is subject to criminal penalties.

The bill amended two federal statutes: The Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 and the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act of 1978.

The bill amended the Victims of the Child Abuse Act of 1990 to extend to US Sailing members the duty to report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, to authorities within 24 hours of learning of such abuse. An individual who is required, but fails, to report the suspected sexual abuse is subject to criminal penalties. Additionally, the bill extended the statute of limitations for victims to bring a civil lawsuit against a perpetrator and allows a claim for punitive damages.

The bill also amended the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act of 1978 by designating the U.S. Center for SafeSport to serve as the independent national safe sport organization. This designation includes the responsibility for developing policies and procedures to prevent emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of amateur athletes. The bill also modifies the obligations of amateur athletic organizations, including National Governing Bodies (NGBs) such as US Sailing and its organizational members.

These organizations must abide by all policies and procedures to prevent abuse and misconduct. They also must comply with the reporting requirements of the Victims of Child Abuse Act, establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between athletes who are minors and adult, offer and provide consistent training to members who are in contact with minors, and prohibit retaliation against a victim or reporting party.

These policies, through the U.S. Center for SafeSport and US Sailing, extend to members of and participants in US Sailing sanctioned events, competitions, and sponsored programs and include requirements to report any suspected sexual misconduct to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

View the Senate Bill and SafeSport Fact Sheet for more information about Protecting Young Victims of Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017. For more information about the U.S. Center for SafeSport or to file a report, visit [SafeSport.org](https://www.safesport.org) or US Sailing's SafeSport information page.