

USASF GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS ETHICS AND THE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY CODE

*2015-2016 Season PRC
V5.0 Amendments
approved by the NACCC
and The National
Advisory Board 4-8-
2014 Approved by the
Board of Directors 5-7-
2014*



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HISTORY OF THE PRC

The PRC was established and implemented in 2009 by the members of the National Advisory Board as a necessary first step in establishing a Code of Conduct for members.

REVISIONS

Annually, the PRC is updated and revised to reflect any current changes dictated by the organizational structure or USASF committee recommendations. The recommendations are presented to the NAB in April and if approved must have Board of Director approval.

GOVERNANCE

The NACCC submits recommendations for *rules and safety guidelines* to the USASF Rules Committee, and ultimately the USASF Board of Directors.

The National Advisory Board is democratically elected to support athletes and members by addressing emerging issues of broad potential impact and *developing policies* for the organization when needed.

IMPLEMENTATION

The USASF Membership Term is August 1st - July 31st. Once the PRC is approved it is digitally housed in each USASF Gym Member Profile. Additionally, upon joining or renewing their USASF Membership, members are prompted to agree to the Terms and Conditions of Membership (PRC).

COMPLIANCE

The gym owner, coaches and athlete members are held accountable through the Disciplinary process facilitated by the USASF and elected members of the NACCC. The Event Producers and Affiliate members sign a membership agreement annually and non-compliance grievances are facilitated by the Compliance Committee.

COLLABORATION

The USASF committees have worked collaboratively to define the standards of conduct for the membership. The latest version of the PRC/Disciplinary Process has been reviewed and approved by USASF Legal Counsel. The PRC revisions and Non- Compliance process is a collaborative effort with recommendations by the USASF Board of Directors, the USASF Disciplinary Committee, The USASF National Advisory Board, The NACCC Executive Board, The USASF National Director of Membership, the USASF Executive Committee, and The USASF Compliance Committee.

BUSINESS ETHICS

The NACCC, serving as a representative for gym owners and coaches has recommended General Principles that are listed only as recommendations to members. *These recommendations are not under the scope and jurisdiction of the Professional Responsibility Code, but serve as guidelines for promoting a membership with standards of integrity and loyalty to other members. The All Star Business Code of Ethics are not eligible for disciplinary or non-compliance review or sanctions.*



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ALL STAR CODE OF BUSINESS ETHICS – General Principal Guidelines

All Star Cheer and Dance can be many things to many people. By legal definition All Star Cheer and Dance is not considered an official sport. Therefore those affiliated with All Star Cheer and Dance operate businesses that offer as their product “competitive cheerleading and dance to their clients”. For the athlete it is a sport, for the Gym owners and Event Producers it is a business. For some people it is a way to get physical exercise, to participate in a unique hobby, and a recreational activity with all the social aspects to it; seeing friends each week and making new ones. To many it is an avenue for personal development teaching team dynamics and lifelong lessons through the highs and lows of competition.

Any time you create an environment with winners, losers, titles, prize money, etc., you can expect that environment to become vigorously competitive. When the participants are contending to achieve the highest recognition on the National or Worlds level, everything becomes much more intense. This intensity extends far beyond the brief time the athlete is competing. It extends to include all the activities of All Star Cheer and Dance: training, coaching, parents, teams, gym owners, and all the money issues required to compete at a higher level.

All Star Cheer and Dance can become very serious business when it reaches this level. It requires not only a time and training commitment it requires a financial commitment as well. Athletes (and parents) must invest money into the required facilities, entry fees for competitions, travel expenses for out of town events, competitive gym dues and fees for more frequent and advanced training by the coach. Coaches and gyms also invest a lot of time and energy into training these more advanced athletes as well as continually developing other athletes to enhance and improve the gym’s entire program. Coaches in particular get a great deal of satisfaction and fulfillment from seeing their efforts in time and training athletes produce good results. They enjoy helping athletes learn, progress and achieve higher goals.

As Cheer and Dance programs grow and become more competitive, by necessity, they rise to the level of a business operation. How that business is conducted becomes very important. Many questions must be asked of oneself, “Is it business first, or does the sport come first?” “Is the bottom line of winning and success, more important than how that is achieved?” “Do personal relationships and loyalties between coaches, athletes and their families take second place to achieving success?”

This is where personal Ethics come into play. There is a huge distinction between 'Legal' and 'Ethical'.

‘Legal’ is a matter of law. “Ethics” are a code of conduct based on personal values and beliefs. Therefore, someone may do something which is ‘legal’ yet ‘unethical’. Not surprisingly, these opposing values have caused and will always cause a measure of conflict. The USASF is the governing body for All Star Cheer and Dance which has clearly defined the rules and regulations for the competition side. The USASF Disciplinary committee oversees any violation of the rules and the NACCC provides the members who serve on that committee (by election of the members) to preserve and protect the integrity of the rules. However, there has not been a clear definition of the ethical standards relating to the business side of All Star Cheer and Dance.



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Therefore, there is often confusion about what is legal or unethical and a small number of people will attempt to justify such competitive business practices as being proper since they are doing nothing 'illegal', however if ethical standards are being violated, the ends do not justify the means. Such practices lead down a slippery slope to soiled reputations, disunity, distrust, broken relationships, not to mention emotionally and financially injured people. In order to create clarity between what is legal and ethical we must define what we collectively believe to be ethical standards.

ALL STAR CODE OF BUSINESS ETHICS – Process

The Coaches and Gym Owner representatives of the NACCC have developed our standard code. These are the values we collectively put forth for all members.

We expect all members to adhere to the rules implemented by the USASF.

We expect the USASF and its members to enforce the rules.

We expect all members of the USASF to establish business practices that are in alignment with the core ethical values the NACCC has established.

Below is a simple list containing a few of the Ethical standards many coaches, gym owners and athletes strive to adhere to in All Star Cheer and Dance. They are not intended to be an all-encompassing solution for every situation, however when the legal system fails us, Ethics stand in the gap. These are not regulations or rules merely the ethical standards to which the All Star Cheer and Dance community strives to attain.

ALL STAR CODE OF BUSINESS ETHICS - (not eligible for Disciplinary or Non Compliance Review)

- I, pledge as a member of the USASF, I will not initiate contact with another programs athletes and families in an effort to solicit or otherwise entice them to leave program they belong to and participate in my program. This practice is unethical.
- I, pledge as a member of the USASF, I will not encourage any of my athletes or family members to contact another programs athletes and families during the competitive season *in an effort to solicit* or otherwise entice them to leave the program they belong to and participate in my program. This practice is unethical.
- I, pledge as a member of the USASF, I will honor and encourage everyone to respect all mutual agreements/contracts made between people whether formal or informal by programs, coaches and athletes.
- I, pledge as a member of the USASF I will promote honest and respectful communications between athletes families, coaches and program owners.
- I, pledge as a member of the USASF to promote honesty, loyalty, trust, respect and personal responsibility and to always preserve and protect the integrity of the sport of All Star Competitive Cheer and Dance.



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SCOPE AND JURISDICTION: The USASF offers five classifications of membership, Gym Owner/Program, Career, Athlete, Event Producers and Affiliates. The Professional Responsibility Code (PRC) outlines the standards of professionalism and ethics. All parties joining the USASF agree to the terms and conditions of the Professional Responsibility Code. There are two Committees that review cases of non-compliance with the PRC:

Disciplinary Committee: Gym owners, Career members, and Athlete members

Compliance Committee: Event Producers and Affiliates

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

1. Gym Program: Includes Gym Owners, Program Directors
2. Career Members: (Includes: Coaches (cheer or dance), judges, choreographers, music producers)
3. Athletes: Includes Basic Athlete and 5 Star Athletes
4. Event Producers: owners, administrators and their employees, Includes Tier 1, 2, 3 and 4 Memberships
5. Affiliates: Includes Vendors and Sponsors administrators and their employees

The mission of the USASF is "To support and enrich the lives of our All Star athletes and members. We provide consistent rules, strive for a safe environment for our athletes, drive competitive excellence, and promote a positive image for the sport."

The USASF is a not for profit organization that is dedicated to safety standards, coaches' education and providing a safe environment that allows for the continued growth of all-star cheerleading and dance across the country. The USASF grants the privilege of membership to individuals (Coaches, Athletes, Affiliates as Individuals), and organizations (Gym Programs, Event Producers, and Affiliates as Organizations) committed to that mission. This privilege of membership may be withdrawn by the USASF if it is found that the member's conduct is not in compliance with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it.

The USASF has adopted this Professional Responsibility Code. The Professional Responsibility Code establishes written principles that guide the conduct to all USASF membership in situations that have Professional ethical implications. This Professional Responsibility Code is offered to confirm to all members of the USASF the intent and will of the USASF leadership to safeguard the best interests of the sport by having USASF members act professionally and responsibly at all times. These acts of Professional Responsibility are guidelines suggested in order to maximize not only the integrity and legitimacy of the All Star Industry, but to safeguard the children that participate.

The USASF has the right to deny, suspend or revoke membership based on conduct inconsistent with USASF policy or standards. The USASF reserves the right to publish a list of individuals whose membership has been suspended or revoked for these reasons.



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The USASF reserves the right to revoke membership, if actions taken by members are deemed, by committee, to not serve the best interests of the sport and/or of the USASF.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT POLICY

The USASF appreciates interaction with our Social Media Channels and provides the content in order to encourage participation from individuals and organizations relating to the sport of All Star Cheer and Dance with various online platforms.

USASF Disclaimer

The USASF encourages the respectful sharing of thoughts and opinions within all of our social media channels, comments, images, or external links posted by those outside the organization do not necessarily represent the views or constitute official endorsement on behalf of the USASF. While we recognize that social media is a 24/7 medium, our moderation capabilities are not. We may not see every inappropriate comment immediately, and we trust in the maturity of our online communities to ignore personal attacks and negative speech and either respond politely or report such cases to us directly. Our social media channels are moderated; The USASF does not necessarily agree with or endorse every comment posted to our Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, blogs, etc. Our goal is to share ideas and information with as many individuals as possible and we plan to accept the majority of comments made to our profile. All links and comments on USASF posts or pages will be reviewed and may be deleted. Repeated violations of this policy may be cause for blocking the author from USASF social media channels.

As such, we reserve the right to delete submissions containing:

- Copyright or trademark infringements,
- Profanity, obscenity or vulgarity,
- Hate speech or defamation to a person or group of people,
- Nudity in profile pictures or any posted pictures,
- Name calling and/or personal attacks,
- Spam comments, such as the same comment posted repeatedly on a profile,

- Comments which are not USASF related , and
- Other comments that the USASF Social Media team deems inappropriate.



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CATEGORY A

All Members

(Members are subject for review for non-compliance. Must follow the non-compliance protocol set forth in this document)

1. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to protect and preserve the sport of All Star Cheerleading and Dance and the rules and regulations which govern it. By accepting the terms and conditions of membership, all members agree to protect and preserve the sport by agreeing to voice concerns, disagreements and differences of USASF Policy or rulings, within the structure of the USASF committees and refrain from utilizing public/social media outlets as a forum to harness support with a clear intent to undermine the USASF.
2. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to follow and uphold the USASF Sportsmanship Code of Conduct.
 - A. In order to uphold the mission of the USASF and ensure that all participants have the benefit of a safe environment, all attendees of USASF Events and all the functions associated with the Event, including, but not limited to the competition site itself, host hotel, etc. must behave accordingly in a respectful, courteous and sportsmanlike manner at all times.
 - B. Any attendee of a USASF event, including but not limited to registered participant, program, coach, or hosting event staff, who physically or verbally assaults or threatens bodily harm to an official, coach, participant, volunteer, or staff member will be subject to immediate disciplinary review and may be banned for one year. Upon a secondary offense, the individual will be permanently banned from all USASF Events and or USASF membership.
 - C. It is the obligation of the Event Producer to investigate and resolve to their best efforts any reports of infractions/violations. Failure to address reported infractions at the event could result in non-compliance for the Event Producer. It is also within the scope and jurisdiction for the event producer to enforce coaches and gym owner sportsmanship conduct expectations when contesting a rule or judging decision.

All Event Producers must report any legality violations that resulted in disqualification via the USASF "Close Out" protocol within 72 hours of the event. It is the obligation of the Event Producer to notify the Disciplinary (via the Regional Director) if the actions that resulted in the disqualification are so egregious that further disciplinary review is necessary. Additionally, any member that received more than one disqualification per season will automatically face disciplinary review. In the case of a third disqualification within the current season, the member will be placed on membership suspension until a formal review by the disciplinary committee takes place. If the suspension is a result of repeated age violations the entire program will be suspended until the disciplinary committee reports their findings. In the event the suspension is levied on an individual member the suspension would only apply to the member. Once a suspension is issued by the USASF the disciplinary hearing has a 60 day timeline to issue a final decision.
 - D. Members will refrain from and prohibit the use or participation in pornographic material in conjunction with anything related to All Star Cheer or dance including social media.
3. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not participate or allow recruiting of athletes to other member gyms while attending a USASF sanctioned event. Recruiting would include



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physically approaching athletes, handing out any type of advertisement, i.e., but not limited to business cards, brochures, flyers on cars, etc.

4. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to comply with all applicable federal/state and municipal criminal codes. This obligation is considered 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, pornography, 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.
5. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to 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 and in compliance with federal/state and municipal laws. It is inconsistent with this obligation for any Gym owner member, Career member, Affiliate member or Event Producer member to solicit or engage in sexual relations with any minor.
6. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not engage in behavior that utilizes the influence of a professional member's position as a Gym owner, Career member, Affiliate member or Event Producer member that encourages sexual relations with an athlete.
7. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not 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.
8. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to 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:
 - a. Use or provide to a third party any drug proscribed by applicable federal, state or municipal law.
 - b. Assist or condone any competing athlete's use of a drug banned by the International Olympic Committee, United States Olympic Committee, 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.
 - c. Provide alcohol to, or condone the use of alcohol by, minors, at USASF activities or, in the case of athlete members, consume alcoholic beverages while a minor.
9. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not misrepresent the policies or actions of the USASF or its authorized representatives. The USASF reserves the right to revoke membership, if actions taken by members are deemed, by the Non- Compliance committee, to not serve the best interests of the sport and/or of the USASF.
10. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not knowingly make false claims pertaining to membership, credentialing on applications, advertising, and marketing for any events.
11. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to report, challenge or file a non-compliance statement upon the first instance of violation of established procedures.
12. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not misrepresent competitive achievements, professional qualifications, education, experience, eligibility, criminal record or affiliations of their gym, coaches, members, clients or other USASF members.



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13. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to avoid 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 use, or be perceived as using, USASF properties, services, opportunities, authority or influence to gain private benefit in any capacity.
14. *All members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not misrepresent the nature or extent of any injury in order to participate (cause an athlete to participate in a competition, camp or other activity) when such participation is inconsistent with the appropriate medical response to the injury.
15. *All members of the USASF* have a Professional Responsibility to adhere to the agreed upon Sanctioning Guidelines referenced in the USASF Members Agreement. All USASF members agree that all competitions sponsored or conducted by any Event Producer, Affiliate, Gym or Career member that include "All Star" cheer and/or dance divisions/categories shall be sanctioned by USASF and meet USASF Sanctioning Standards. USASF reserves the right to review all such competitions for compliance with these standards. In order to be sanctioned, members must enter into separate Company Member Agreements with USASF.

CATEGORY B

GYM OWNER MEMBER

(Gym Owner Members are subject for review for non-compliance for Category A and B)

1. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to develop and implement a policy that educates and holds accountable that the athletes representing the member gym are USASF registered members and as such any unsportsmanlike conduct may have disciplinary consequences not only for the athlete but for the member Gym.
2. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to carry liability insurance.
3. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to provide documentation upon request that athletes representing member gym are age compliant with the guidelines established by the USASF.
4. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to insure that the member gym has been provided with authentic verification of the athlete's age by client.
5. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to maintain and keep current all appropriate state and local business licensing requirements.
6. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not make false statements on registrations, advertising or marketing materials with regards to USASF membership, credentialing, or certifications.
7. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to comply with the USASF Gym Release policy that states: Any athlete that has competed on the floor with a team in any level from a gym (Primary gym), during the Worlds competition season (November 1, 2015 – May 1, 2016) will have to have a USASF Gym Release Waiver signed by the owner of that



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gym (Primary Gym) before that athlete is eligible to compete with another gym (Secondary gym) at the 2016 Cheerleading Worlds . The USASF Gym Release Waiver is located on the www.usasf.net website.

8. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information about another member.
9. *All Gym owner members* of the USASF have a Professional Responsibility to avoid 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 use, or be perceived as using, USASF properties, services, opportunities, authority or influence to gain private benefit in any capacity.

iPromise (USASF Code of Conduct) was developed by a subcommittee of the USASF National Advisory Board. iPromise is co-supported by the Parent's Action Committee, NCSSE and AACCA. The USASF CODE OF CONDUCT and the PRC intends to provide standards of ethical conduct for the coaches involved with the USASF and its member organizations. It provides the General Principles and Ethical Standards which cover many situations encountered by coaches, with its principle goals the welfare and protection of the participants. All members of the USASF are expected to respect and protect human and civil rights and not knowingly participate or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

COACH SPORTSMANSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT

Play by the rules. I will lead by example, demonstrating fair play and faith in event officials. When contesting or challenging a team score at an event I will demonstrate respect for the official and the decision, and understand that any form of disrespect or intimidation to the judges, official or event producer may result in penalties or forfeiture to my team or program. I also understand that the Event Producer has the obligation to uphold the Sportsmanship Code at all USASF Events.

I understand it is the spirit of the rules that protect the integrity of the sport and I will uphold that integrity with honor.

Respect athletes, other teams and event officials. I will put the emotional and physical well-being of my athletes above all else, including any internal desire or external pressure to win. I understand that their safety is my primary concern. I will treat all other teams and team members with the utmost respect in every possible circumstance. I will behave within the event's code of conduct, recognizing the authority of the event officials and workers in every possible circumstance.

Organize sportsmanship conduct for parents and participants. I will make a stance for sportsmanship, setting expectations of participating with respect, competing with integrity, winning with character and losing with dignity. I will organize a parent's packet that clearly outlines the sportsmanship promise.

Make pursuit of victory more important than winning. I will teach that striving to win, rather than winning itself is what is important in life. I understand that the integrity in which we perform and accept an award is a true gage of success. That is a privilege to be recognized as the best, in a division or event.

Integrate positive life lessons on and off the mat. I will devote my energy to teaching life skills and cheer and dance skills. I understand that the life lessons I give to my athletes will stay with them much longer than any medal or trophy.

See the big picture and exercise self-control in adverse circumstances. I will increase focus and intensity rather than retaliation or blaming. I understand that I am responsible for my behavior and I will not allow profanity, anger or disrespect to be a part of any of my interactions including social media and in person.



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Exemplify sportsmanlike conduct. I will be a positive example and portray the character qualities I expect from my athletes. I understand that I am a leader and that every choice I make affects those who follow me. I will uphold the promise to the best of my abilities and always work to improve myself, my team and my sport. I understand I am expected to be a positive example in my private and public settings.



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ATHLETE SPORTSMANSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT

Play by the rules. I will learn and obey the rules of my sport and train to perform routines within those guidelines.

Respect myself, my coach, other teams and event officials. I will treat all other teams and team members, with the utmost respect in every possible circumstance. I will respect myself enough to agree to train and compete with my safety and the safety of my teammates as first priority. I will behave within every Event's code of conduct, recognizing the authority of event officials and workers in every possible circumstance. I will appreciate honest efforts that are made fairly in the quest of victory.

Optimize my experience by meeting athletes from other gyms. I understand that all- star cheerleading and dance offers great opportunities to travel meet athletes from other programs and learn to respect my competitors.

Make pursuit of victory more important than winning. I understand that winning isn't everything, but rather my will to train to win that matters most. While victory shall be my expected goal, defeat is not a disgrace.

Interact, in person and on the internet, with integrity. I will not comment negatively about my opponents on any form of social media: facebook, youtube, message boards, etc. I understand that doing so reflects poorly upon the image of my sport, my program and myself.

See the big picture and exercise self-control in adverse circumstances. I will increase focus and intensity at practice rather than retaliate or blame others. I understand that I am responsible for my behavior, and I will not allow profanity, anger or disrespect to be a part of any of my interactions. I will not allow the prospect of defeat to be an excuse for unethical or unsportsmanlike behavior.

Exemplify sportsmanlike conduct. I will be a positive role model on my team and within my community. I understand that I am leader and that every choice I make affects those who follow me. I will uphold the promise to the best of my abilities and always work to improve myself, my team and my sport. I understand I am expected to be a positive example in my private and public settings.