

# ROW4ALL

Getting More People Into Rowing



## SafeSport Policy

**Approved January 2024**

ROW4ALL adopted SafeSport Policy from the US Rowing, a national governing body for the sport of rowing in the United States.

The goal of this policy is to help eliminate any form of misconduct in the areas of sexual misconduct, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, bullying, harassment and hazing in our sport.

All coaches, athletes, Board members and “Adult Participants” must read and follow ROW4ALL SafeSport Policy. All other participants are encouraged to read and be familiar with this policy.

The term “Adult Participants” means: any individual 18 years of age or older who is involved in ROW4ALL activities.

ROW4ALL has established policies and procedures to better assure all members of our rowing community are protected from instances of misconduct. The [US Rowing SafeSport Policy](#) specifically defines six areas of misconduct: Bullying, Hazing, Harassment (including sexual or gender harassment), Emotional Misconduct, Physical Misconduct, and Sexual Misconduct (including child sexual abuse and/or grooming behaviors). US Rowing’s definitions of prohibited conduct can be found in [Part IV of their Safe Sport Manual](#).

ROW4ALL is also subject to the state law definition of hazing (see Appendix A).

In addition to misconduct as defined in the USRowing SafeSport policy, ROW4ALL defines prohibited conduct to include: (i) possession or use of

tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances (including marijuana) at or in connection with any ROW4ALL activity or function; (ii) theft or vandalism at or in connection with any ROW4ALL activities, (iii) written, verbal or electronic expression that contains discriminatory content, creates a hostile environment between or among members of and participants in ROW4ALL, causes or threatens physical or emotional harm to an individual or a class of individuals, is motivated by bigotry or bias including, by racial, religious, ethnic, handicap or sexual orientation prejudice, or otherwise, in the discretion of the Board, impinges on, interferes with or disrupts the activities and participation of participants in, or tarnishes the reputation of ROW4ALL.

**ROW4ALL will not tolerate any participant (adult or minor) who engages in prohibited conduct. If, after investigation, any participant is found to have engaged in prohibited conduct, that participant may be subject to discipline, suspension or termination from ROW4ALL or, if appropriate or required by state law, referral to the state or local authorities for further consideration.**

Our SafeSport policies will further include:

- Background Checks – All Coaches, Board members and other non-athlete Adult Participants who have regular contact with student athletes, if any, will undergo a [National Center for Safety Initiative background check](#) every two years.
- [SafeSport Training](#) – All athlete and non-athlete Adult Participants must complete the on-line SafeSport “core” training within 45 days of becoming a Coach, or Adult Participant that is directly involved in working with minors, followed by annual refresher courses (while they remain active with ROW4ALL). Every four years, required Adult Participants are to retake the core training.
  - Minor athletes (with parental consent) and other adults involved in ROW4ALL who may not qualify as Adult Participants may also take training on the prevention and reporting of child abuse. If interested, the parent should contact the President of ROW4ALL or one of the Coaches.
- Anti-Hazing Law (IL) – All athletes and all non-athlete Adult Participants must be familiar with the **Illinois Hazing Law**. The text of the statute is attached as **Appendix A**.

- MAAPP - All coaches, athletes, their parents/guardians, and all non-athlete Adult Participants must be familiar with ROW4ALL's **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy** attached as **Appendix B**, as well as the procedures we have adopted for reporting instances of misconduct, investigation, mediation, and hearings attached as **Appendix C**.

Watch the most important MAAPP standards and concepts in a series of short [animated videos](#)

- Reporting – attached as **Appendix C** is ROW4ALL's policies with respect to reporting suspected inappropriate or prohibited conduct.

While these policies will help ROW4ALL improve athlete safety, in no way can they guarantee athlete safety in all circumstances. These policies are not comprehensive of all prevention strategies, nor are they intended to be. They remain subject to periodic review and modification by the Board. We invite parents and athletes to contact any member of the Board with suggested changes or updates to the policies.

## APPENDIX A

[Hazing](#) is generally the completion of any activity that a person is required to join or participate in as a group that degrades or abuses them regardless of their willingness to participate. Hazing is also referred to as initiation or ragging and is most popularly known as occurring in fraternities, sororities, and sports teams. Many schools and universities have more specific definitions and anti-hazing policies, and the state of Illinois also has laws that define and prohibit hazing.

## Illinois Hazing Laws

Under [720 ILCS § 12C-50](#), a person violates the hazing laws when they knowingly require another person or student in a school, college, university, or educational institute to perform an act in order to be inducted or admitted into a group, organization, or society associated with the educational institution if the act:

- causes bodily harm to anyone, and
- is not authorized or sanctioned by the education institution.

# Examples of Hazing

Hazing can be subtle (i.e. seen as harmless or meaningless), harassment (i.e. meant to annoy or frustrate an initiate), or violent (i.e. dangerous acts that can cause a person harm).

## **Subtle hazing can include but is not limited to:**

- Addressing inducted members by certain names or in a certain manner (i.e. dancing, bowing, etc.)
- Busy work
- Communication restrictions
- Exercise or physical activities
- Sleep deprivation

## **Harassment hazing can include but is not limited to:**

- Abandonment in an isolated area or area away from campus (with the expectation you must find your way back)
- Pranks (i.e. stealing from staff or professors, vandalism, etc.)
- Servitude or chores
- Verbal harassment (i.e. participating in a lineup where people are demeaned)
- Wearing uncomfortable or offensive outfits or “uniforms”

## **Violent hazing can include but is not limited to:**

- Branding, labeling, or shaving parts of a participant’s body
- Coerced sexual activity
- Forced nudity
- Kidnapping
- Pushing, tackling, or other physical activity
- Whipping

# Consequences of Hazing in Illinois

As hazing is illegal, offenders can suffer criminal consequences. Hazing is typically classified as a Class A misdemeanor, which is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,500 and imprisonment for up to a year. A conviction will remain on your record and will appear on background checks, which can impact you for the rest of your life.

In addition to criminal penalties, an alleged offender can be penalized by their school or university and may be suspended or expelled. They may also be sued by the supposed victim in a civil case, which can result in hefty compensatory awards.

## Is Hazing a Felony in Illinois?

Yes, in some cases, hazing is considered a felony. If the hazing causes a person to die or suffer great bodily harm, an alleged offender can be charged with a Class 4 felony, which is punishable by a fine of up to \$25,000 and imprisonment for up to three years.

### **APPENDIX B**

#### **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAP)**

ROW4ALL is committed to creating and supporting an environment and a culture free from misconduct. The welfare of all individuals involved with our organization is paramount. Behavior and actions that constitute misconduct will not be tolerated.

In the event that one observes inappropriate or suspected behaviors such as bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), stalking, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, and sexual misconduct (including child sexual abuse and/or grooming behaviors), it is the personal responsibility of each individual to immediately report their observations to the President or another member of the Board. Where possible and appropriate, everyone should be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations and potential boundary violations by redirecting inappropriate behaviors to promote

positive behaviors, confront inappropriate or harmful behaviors, and report behaviors when necessary.

This policy applies to Coaches, non-athlete Adult Participants, as well as all athletes. Policy violations, misconduct, hazing, discrimination and physical and sexual abuse must be reported consistent with the Reporting Policy as described in the attached appendix.

To access the complete **USRowing Safe Sport Policy Manual**, go to:  
[https://maapp.uscenterforsafesport.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Rowing\\_MAAPP\\_111021-APPROVED.pdf](https://maapp.uscenterforsafesport.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Rowing_MAAPP_111021-APPROVED.pdf).

Definitions of inappropriate conduct and harmful behaviors prohibited under the US Rowing MAAP policy (and by extension, the ROW4ALL MAAP Policy) can be found in the USRowing Safe Sport Policy Manual starting at page 23.

Exceptions to the ROW4ALL MAAP policy must be approved by the Board. Current exceptions with respect to the meaning and scope of Adult Participant as used in this ROW4ALL MAAP policy are:

1. A Close-in-Age Exception if a) the adult participant has no authority over the minor athlete; and b) the adult participant is not more than four years older than the minor athlete.
2. Exceptions for dual relationships (e.g., parent/Adult Participant interacting with own minor child).

It is recommended parents take training on child abuse prevention before providing consent under these policies:

1. Watch the most important MAAPP standards and concepts in a series of short [animated videos](#)
2. Parent and Guardian [Handbook](#) for SafeSport
3. [Tools](#) to help address emotional and physical abuse and misconduct in sport.

**One-On-One Interactions** – All one-on-one in-program contact between a non-athlete Adult Participant and an athlete must be observable and interruptible, except in emergency circumstances.

**Meetings and Training Sessions** – All non-athlete Adult Participants must follow the one-on-one interaction policy in all meetings and training sessions where athlete(s) are present. Individual training sessions must be observable and interruptible. Parents/guardians must be allowed to observe individual training sessions. Parents/guardians must provide consent for any one-on-one individual training sessions.

**Massages and Rubdowns** – ROW4ALL programs do not include massages and rubdowns (however, Coaches or an Adult Participant may apply first aid when necessary).

**Areas Where Athletes Change Clothes** – ROW4ALL does not have any locker rooms. However, in the event locker rooms or enclosed changing rooms or restrooms are made available:

- Non-athlete Adult Participants must ensure that all in-program contact with athlete(s) in a locker room, changing area, or similar space where athlete(s) are present is observable and interruptible.
- No Adult Participant or athlete can use the photographic or recording capabilities of any device in locker rooms, changing areas, or any other area designated as a place for changing clothes or undressing.
- Adult Participants and athletes must not change clothes or behave in a manner that intentionally or recklessly exposes their breasts, buttocks, groins, or genitals to an athlete.
- Non-athlete Adult Participants must not shower with athletes.

**Social Media and Electronic Communications** – All one-on-one electronic communications between a non-athlete Adult Participant and an athlete must be open and transparent; additionally, all such communications must be professional in nature and relevant to ROW4ALL activities, participation, practices, training or races.

- Open and transparent means that the non-athlete Adult Participant copies or includes on any communication the athlete's parent/guardian, another adult family member of the athlete, or another Adult Participant.
- If an athlete communicates with the non-athlete Adult Participant first, the non-athlete Adult Participant must follow this policy for any reply(ies).

- Only platforms that allow for open and transparent communication may be used by non-athlete Adult Participants to communicate with athletes.
- Non-athlete Adult Participants are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with athletes.
- When a non-athlete Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team, squad or any number of participants, the non-athlete Adult Participant must copy or include on any such communication another Adult Participant or the athlete's parents/guardians.
- A parent/guardian may request in writing that non-athlete Adult Participants not contact their child through any form of electronic communication. However, in those cases, ROW4ALL will require that the parent/guardian provide ROW4ALL with such parent/guardian's contact information for any and all program electronic communications (e.g., practice/class schedules, races, cancellations, time/location changes, fundraisers, etc.) and you will be responsible for your child's compliance with rules governing attendance and participation.

**Transportation** – A non-athlete Adult Participant cannot transport a minor athlete/participant one-on-one during in-program travel except in case of emergency or unless accompanied by another Adult Participant or two other athletes, or with a parent/guardian written consent.

**Lodging** – All in-program contact at a hotel or lodging site between a non-athlete Adult Participant and an athlete must be observable and interruptible, and a non-athlete Adult Participant cannot share a hotel room or otherwise sleep in the same room with an athlete(s) (other than a non-athlete Adult Participant that is a parent or guardian of the athlete).

- Parents/guardians must provide consent for all in-program lodging.
- If ROW4ALL performs room checks during in-program lodging, the one-on-one interaction policy must be followed and at least two Adult Participants must be present for the room checks.

**Out-of-Program Contact** – Non-athlete Adult Participants shall not have contact with athlete(s) without legal/parent guardian consent other than contact that is relevant or related to ROW4ALL activities, participation,



practices, training or races (for clarification, permitted contact includes the summer rowing camps, community rowing program, indoor rowing classes, cross-training classes, and other ROW4ALL activities) and such contact should take place in locations that are observable and interruptible, except in emergency circumstances.

**Gifting** – Non-athlete Adult Participants may not give personal gifts or prizes to athlete(s) unless all eligible athletes have the same opportunity to earn the gift or prize and it serves a motivational, athletic achievement or educational purpose.

**Photography/Video** - Photographs or videos of athletes may only be taken in public view and must observe generally accepted standards of decency. Adult Participants should not publicly share or post photos or videos of athlete(s) if the Adult Participant or ROW4ALL has not obtained the Parent/Guardian and athlete's consent (to clarify, ROW4ALL registration includes this consent).

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Reporting Form and Process**

You should report prohibited conduct of any member of the ROW4ALL community including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, employees, volunteers, race officials and other Adult Participants to any member of the Board or a coach. Any report or complaint of misconduct is referred to in this policy as a report or complaint.

A report or complaint can be made in any way that is most comfortable for the person initiating the report including – written, oral, in-person, telephonically, by electronic mail or text. A complaint or report can be made anonymously. However, ROW4ALL encourages the reporting party to provide enough detail to allow for a proper investigation, if required. You do not have to be the target of the misconduct to report such suspected misconduct. Anyone witnessing or hearing about suspected misconduct should report it. As a convenience, a form of report is attached to this Appendix for use by any complainant. Use of this form is not required.

Upon receipt, reports or complaints will be initially provided to the President(s) (if a President is the subject of the report or complaint, it will be shared with the other Board Member not named in the report). In all

cases, the report will not be shared outside of the Board until the subject of the report who was harmed by the alleged misconduct expressly chooses that the report become a formal complaint. However, if the Board member or coach receiving the report is required by applicable law or organization rules to report the complaint to local or state law enforcement, US Rowing or U.S. Center for SafeSport, then such Board member or coach receiving the report or complaint, after consulting with the President(s) (Board member if the other is conflicted), may report the incident accordingly.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Board member or coach in receipt of the complaint, in consultation with the President(s) (Board member if the other is conflicted), will determine if the complaint should be processed, remanded back to the reporter, or in the case of sexual misconduct or aggravated assault, submitted to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and local and/or state authorities, as required.

Complaints determined by the ROW4ALL Board will generally be of a lesser nature. They will not include sexual misconduct issues, issues involving a felony, or issues to be prosecuted under local or state laws. Sexual misconduct will be immediately referred to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation. ROW4ALL will not investigate suspicions or allegations of physical or sexual misconduct, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations other than to ask clarifying questions of the person making the report in order to adequately report the suspicions or allegations to law enforcement.

### **Investigation and Transparency**

If ROW4ALL retains jurisdiction over a complaint, it will be investigated by one or more disinterested members of the Board or a Coach designated by the President (which could include the President) who does not have a conflict of interest with respect to that complaint. If a President has a conflict of interest with respect to the complaint, then another Board member or Coach (or both) will investigate the complaint. Investigation of a complaint shall include a review of relevant documents made available to the individuals investigating the complaint and interviews (or attempted interviews) with the complainant, the person(s) named in the complaint and

other persons known to the investigators as having information related directly to the complaint.

The investigator(s) will prepare a written report, including any recommended penalties or proposed resolutions to the complaint and submit the written report to the disinterested members of the Board for their consideration and determination. Among the alternatives that the Board can consider with respect to a complaint are informal or formal mediation, termination or suspension from continued participation in or employment by ROW4ALL or other discipline of the individual(s) involved, in each case in the discretion of the majority of the disinterested members of the Board.

Upon receipt of a credible and specific allegation of misconduct or any other violation of the ROW4ALL MAAP Policy, and pending the outcome of any investigation (internal or external) ROW4ALL, by a vote of the majority of the disinterested members of the Board, may immediately suspend or terminate (with or without pay) the membership, participation or employment of the individual(s) named in a complaint as a means to ensure participant safety.

ROW4ALL will not encourage or tolerate attempts from any individual to retaliate, punish, or in any way harm any individual who reports a concern in good faith. Any allegation of misconduct under the ROW4ALL MAAP Policy that is determined to be frivolous, fraudulent or otherwise made in bad faith, will be considered a violation of the Policy itself. Such conduct may also be subject to criminal prosecution and/or civil proceedings.

### **Recommended SafeSport Reporting Form**

ROW4ALL strongly encourages the reporting of misconduct. ROW4ALL appreciates your willingness to report inappropriate behavior.

#### **Date of Submission:**

**Section I: This section is about the individual alleged to have acted inappropriately. Please provide as much information as possible.**

1. Name of individual you are reporting (First & Last):  
Comments:

2. Age (or approximate age):

3. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Address (City, State required):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Position(s) this individual holds or held (please circle all that apply) at ROW4ALL:

Coach / Assistant Coach / Volunteer / Racing Official / Board Member /  
Captain/ Rower/ Coxswain/ Other / Not Sure

Comments:

**Section II: This section asks questions about the incident or incidents you are reporting. Please provide as much specific information as you are able.**

6. What happened (i.e. describe what happened including who, what, when, where):
  
7. Where did the incident or incidents take place? (City, State and any other available location information):

**Section III: This section is about the individuals harmed by the alleged inappropriate conduct. If you are the victim and wish to remain anonymous, you may do so. In that case, please enter only your age and club affiliation.**

8. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Age (or approximate age): \_\_\_\_\_
10. Club affiliation or position (if any): \_\_\_\_\_
11. Contact phone number (Note, if this person is under 18, please provide contact information for parent or guardian):  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Contact e-mail address (Note, if this person is under 18, please provide contact information for parent or guardian):  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section IV: Your Information (if reporting party is the victim, please state “same as above”)**

**You may remain anonymous if you wish. However, providing your information is vastly helpful to a swift and effective investigation. A person reporting alleged inappropriate conduct should not fear any retribution and/or consequences when filing a report in good faith (that is not frivolous, fraudulent or otherwise made in bad faith).**

14. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Phone number (Note, if this person is under 18, please provide contact information for parent or guardian):  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. E-mail address (Note, if this person is under 18, please provide contact information for parent or guardian):  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Club affiliation or position (if any):  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. Relationship to victim (please circle all that apply):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Self Volunteer
  - Parent/Guardian of victim Other or prefer not to say
  - Parent/Guardian of another athlete Coach
  - Other family member
  - Friend or acquaintance
  - Fellow athlete

**Section V: Other Information**

18. If you have any other information that would be helpful to an investigation of the alleged or suspected misconduct you have reported, please enter it here:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_