

Attention All Coaches!
Coaches' Registration Process beginning July 1, 2008

At the 2007 U.S. Figure Skating Governing Council meeting, the Board of Directors and Governing Council passed a new coaches' registration policy that will become effective July 1, 2008 for the 2008-2009 skating season. This new policy will consist of three major components:

1. Successfully passing background screening.
2. Providing proof of coaches' liability insurance.
3. Paid full membership in U.S. Figure Skating - home club or individual member.

Beginning July 1, 2008, all coaches will have to comply with the coaches' registration policy in order to be allowed to instruct/coach during the following sanctioned activities during the 2008-2009 skating season:

- all qualifying and nonqualifying competitions
- test sessions
- all performances including ice shows, exhibitions, recitals and carnivals
- any other USFS sanctioned club activities

U.S. Figure Skating is a membership based organization with over 70% of its members 17 years of age or under. In keeping with the standards of many youth sports organizations, schools and recreational programs in America today, U.S. Figure Skating has implemented a background screening process to help ensure that we are providing a safe environment and protecting the welfare of all participants in USFS sanctioned activities. Parents must also have the highest degree of confidence that their children are not only receiving good care and proper instruction, but are also safe from improper conduct.

U.S. Figure Skating is proud to announce a working relationship with National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) which will provide comprehensive background screening services. NCSI is one of the leaders in providing background screening to youth-serving organizations. It works in partnership with the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS), which serves organizations representing over 52 million boys and girls.

NCSI will conduct comprehensive background screening using the Center's Check it Twice™ product and a simple "Red Light/Green Light" clearance report issued in accordance with the *Recommended Guidelines*® published by NCYS. This is part of a national movement towards the standardization of safety programs for youth-serving organizations in this country.

U.S. Figure Skating has worked with NCSI to ensure that this process is convenient, secure and confidential. The process for screening is simple and generally takes about five minutes. When U.S. Figure Skating receives a 'green light' from NCSI, and verification of coaches' liability insurance from each coach, the registration process will be finalized and a U.S. Figure Skating membership card will be issued to the coach through either the designated home club or as an individual membership.

Process for coaches to register: After June 1, 2008, all information will be available on the U.S. Figure Skating homepage. In order to meet the qualifying competition registration deadline, all coaches must submit their information for a background screen no later than August 1, 2008.

U.S. Figure Skating appreciates the cooperation and understanding of all members to help implement this program to ensure that the environment in all U.S. Figure Skating programs is as safe as possible for all participants.

Information to be Checked

All individuals screened for U.S. Figure Skating shall undergo a background check that includes:

- Two independent national databases;
- Sex offender registries of all available states;
- Social Security Number and address verification;
- Federal terrorist database search;
- Non-database (county courthouse runner) search of county criminal records in the jurisdiction of longest and most recent residence in the past five years; and
- International background checks for countries where the individual has lived, worked, or studied for three or more consecutive months during the past five years.

Findings

NCSI will issue results to the applicant and U.S. Figure Skating based on a “Red Light/Green Light” system. A “Green Light” or “meets the criteria” finding indicates an individual is suitable for participation in U.S. Figure Skating with regard to the background search. A “Red Light” finding means the individual “does not meet the criteria” and is not suitable for participation in U.S. Figure Skating with regard to the background search. If questions arise during a background search, the applicant will be contacted directly by NCSI and provided the opportunity to correct potential errors in the applicant’s record or provide additional information prior to issuing a “Red Light”. In such situations, the U.S. Figure Skating Executive Director may also be contacted.

A conviction or disclosure by an applicant that contains the following information will be flagged as a “Red Light” or “does not meet the criteria”:

- Any felony (any crime punishable by confinement of greater than one year);
- Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person;
- Any lesser crime in which sexual relations is an element, including “victimless” crimes of a sexual nature (including pornography);
- Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol);
- Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals; or
- Any sex offender registrant.

Additionally, the following information will result in further investigation involving the applicant and a further search of applicable court records, which will lead to a determination of either a “Red Light” or a “Green Light”:

- An arrest of one or more of the criterion offenses with no disposition noted;
- Expunctions, restoration of rights, or pardons of a criterion offense;
- Any charge involving a child resulting in a disposition favorable to the applicant; or
- An arrest or conviction where it is not readily apparent if drugs or alcohol are involved.

The above criteria are contained within the guidelines developed by the NCYS and have been adopted by NCSI. The NCYS considers the criteria for a “Red Light” or “does not meet the criteria” findings to be consistent with the principles of the federal PROTECT Act of 2003.

Review of Background Search Findings

Should an applicant contest the content of a record provided to the applicant as part of the NCSI background search, the applicant may seek an appeal of the record with NCSI pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

Should an applicant contest a U.S. Figure Skating decision to deny membership or participation in U.S. Figure Skating activities based on a “Red Light” finding resulting from the background search, the applicant has the right to appeal the decision to U.S. Figure Skating pursuant to a process established by U.S. Figure Skating.