

Official USA Powerlifting Lift Together Mentor Code of Conduct

Chapter 1

What is the Mentor Code of Conduct?

The Lift Together Mentor Code of Conduct establishes the expectations, ethical standards, and behavioral guidelines that are required of all mentors volunteering in the Lift Together program. Our program's mission is to provide safe, supportive, and professional meet-day guidance to all athletes.

All mentors are expected to uphold the integrity of Lift Together and contribute to a positive powerlifting environment. Failure to adhere to these standards and expectations may result in removal from the program and ineligibility to participate in the future as a mentor.

Chapter 2

Athlete Safety & Protection Mentor Expectations

The safety and wellbeing of athletes is the highest priority of Lift Together.

Mentors are expected to:

- Prioritize athlete physical and emotional safety over competitive outcomes
- Never encourage unsafe weight selection, rushed attempts, or performance decisions that compromise health
- Avoid physical contact unless necessary for meet-day support (spotting assistance) and only after verbal consent
- Immediately report suspected abuse, harassment, grooming behavior, or policy violations to the USA Powerlifting official Code of Conduct Violation form on the official USA Powerlifting page under About us and Code of Conduct (<https://www.jotform.com/usapowerlifting/code-of-conduct>)
- Comply with all SafeSport-related and USA Powerlifting Code of Conduct policies and competition venue safety rules

Athlete Safety & Protection Prohibited Conduct

As safety and wellbeing of athletes is the highest priority of Lift Together, it is important that we acknowledge behavior that is unacceptable and grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Any conduct that is similar in nature, intent, or impact to the prohibited behaviors outlined in this Mentor Code of Conduct will also be considered a violation. Determinations regarding whether conduct undermines athlete safety, program integrity, or professional standards may be made in consultation with the USA Powerlifting Coaching Committee, USA Powerlifting Disciplinary Committee, and USA Powerlifting Executive Committee, which will assist Lift Together in evaluating and addressing such matters

The following behavior is considered prohibited conduct, including not limited to:

- Sexual comments, advances, or relationships with assigned athletes
- Inappropriate physical contact especially unnecessary physical contact that is not pertaining to meet day support (spotting and helping with equipment with verbal consent)
- Body shaming or appearance-based criticism
- Dismissing or minimizing an athlete's injury or medical concerns.
- Emotional manipulation such as guilt, pressuring, intimidating your athlete into decisions they are not comfortable with

Chapter 3

Supporting Adaptive Athletes

Lift Together mentors are expected to provide inclusive, respectful, and individualized support to adaptive athletes. Adaptive athletes may compete with physical, sensory, or neurological disabilities, and mentors must prioritize athlete autonomy, dignity, and safety when providing the proper meet-day assistance.

Mentors must adhere to these guidelines:

1. Mentors must follow the adaptive athlete's instructions regarding how they prefer to receive assistance. Athletes are the experts on their own needs and equipment, and mentors should never assume what support is required.
2. Mentors must ask for consent before providing any physical assistance, including helping with equipment, mobility aids, or positioning.
3. Adaptive athletes may use specialized equipment, prosthetics, braces, wheelchairs, or modified setups. It is best that mentors should take time before the competition to understand the athlete's equipment and how it should be handled.

4. Mentors should communicate clearly and respectfully with adaptive athletes regarding attempt selection, timing, and warm-up planning to account for extra time that might be needed to accommodate their disability.
5. Athletes should never draw unnecessary attention to an athlete's disability. Conversations about an athlete's condition should only occur when relevant to competition support and with the athlete's consent.
6. Mentors must be attentive to safety considerations that may affect adaptive athletes during warm-ups, equipment changes, or platform preparation. If a mentor is unsure how to safely assist, they should seek help from meet officials or the athlete.

Examples of Supporting Adaptive Athletes

Adaptive athletes may require different forms of support depending on their individual needs. Mentors should always communicate with the athlete first to determine what assistance is appropriate.

1. Athletes Who Use Wheelchairs or Have Mobility Limitations :

Mentors may assist by helping clear pathways in warm-up areas, carrying equipment, loading and unloading weights, or helping transport personal gear between the warm-up room and the platform. Mentors should ensure the athlete has enough time to move between areas and coordinate attempt timing accordingly. If your athlete needs help which includes physically helping them in and out of their wheelchair, please only do so with verbal consent.

2. Athletes with Limb Differences or Prosthetics :

Some athletes may compete using prosthetics or specialized equipment. Mentors may assist by helping monitor equipment placement, ensuring straps or supportive gear are ready when needed, and confirming that platform setup aligns with the athlete's preferred lifting position. If your athlete needs assistance with physically putting on specialized equipment, please do so appropriately with verbal consent.

3. Athletes with Hearing Impairments

Mentors should ensure communication is clear and visible. This may include maintaining eye contact when speaking, using written notes or phone messages if needed, and confirming the athlete understands changes to attempt timing or flight order.

4. Athletes with Neurological or Coordination Difference

Mentors may assist with organization and pacing during the meet. This can include helping track attempts, reminding athletes of timing, assisting with equipment setup, and helping reduce unnecessary stress in the warm-up area.

Chapter 4

Professional Mentor Conduct at Competitions & Events

As mentors are representing Lift Together when entering competition spaces to support their athlete matches, it is important for mentors to conduct themselves professionally at USA Powerlifting competition spaces and events.

Mentors are expected to:

- Arrive on time and remain present and attentive while assigned to an athlete
- Make sure to check if Liftingcast is updated periodically, especially if you are tracking how many lifters are before yours on your phone. Check the board in the warmup room if there is one
- Dress appropriately for competition environments (will include more information about proper attire later on)
- Communicate clearly and calmly with staff, referees, loaders, and coaches
- Follow all federation rules and venue policies
- Refrain from profanity or inappropriate behavior directed at officials, competitors, or staff
- Avoid public disputes or confrontations

Mentors are not allowed to:

- Argue aggressively with referees
- Consume alcohol or use recreational drugs while actively mentoring
- Leave an athlete without notice during active competition sessions

Chapter 5

Importance of Boundaries & Appropriate Relationships

Boundaries are very important to maintain a safe, respectful, and effective mentor-athlete relationship. Because mentors hold a position of influence and trust, they are expected to

uphold professional boundaries at all times. These standards are meant to protect athletes, preserve the integrity of the Lift Together program, and prevent conflicts of interest.

Mentors are expected to:

- Keep mentor-athlete communication focused on performance, logistics, and encouragement
- Avoid excessive personal disclosure unrelated to mentorship
- Maintain transparency in communication
- Avoid private one-on-one meetings in isolated settings

Mentors are prohibited from:

- Engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with athletes they mentor
- Exchanging sexually suggestive messages or content
- Use their position for financial gain
- Making any inappropriate comments concerning the athlete's body

Chapter 6

Equity, Inclusion & Respect

Lift Together is committed to creating an inclusive and affirming space for athletes of all shapes, colors, races, identities, etc. Discriminatory behavior is unacceptable and not tolerated.

Mentors are required to:

- Use athletes' correct names and pronouns
- Treat all athletes equally regardless of race, gender, body size, experience level, ability, or background
- Refrain from discriminatory language, stereotypes, or jokes

Chapter 7

Social Media & Public Representation

Mentors are considered ambassadors of Lift Together and how you represent the program on social media is very important as we want to maintain the image of our mission which is to help make powerlifting a more safe and equitable place for lifters especially in competition.

Mentors are expected to:

- Obtain consent before posting photos or videos of athletes
- Avoid posting private athlete information (injuries, emotional distress)
- Refrain from public criticism of athletes, officials, or other mentors
- Refrain from misrepresenting their credentials or role
- Avoid engaging in online harassment or bullying

Chapter 8

Reporting & Accountability

All reports of misconduct will be taken seriously and handled through a structured and confidential reporting process. Reports can be submitted through the USA Powerlifting National Office which is the primary reporting center for all complaints in order to ensure all relevant details are documented. You will need to complete a Code of Conduct violation form which can be found on the official USA Powerlifting page under About us and Code of Conduct (<https://www.jotform.com/usapowerlifting/code-of-conduct>)

Reports will be forwarded to the USA Powerlifting Executive Director who then notifies the USA Powerlifting Disciplinary Committee to start a proper investigation with an investigator. The Disciplinary Committee reviews the findings and issues a determination, which is then sent to the Executive Committee for final thoughts and approval. The Disciplinary Committee or the Executive Director will reach back out to you with the final outcome and determination of the investigation. Lift Together does not serve as the final adjudicating authority but facilitates proper reporting and escalation, and may consult with the USA Powerlifting Executive Committee and USA Powerlifting Disciplinary Committee when evaluating and addressing reported concerns.

Mentors are expected to:

- Report suspected policy violations
- Cooperate with internal reviews if needed
- Maintain confidentiality during investigations

Consequences can include but are not limited to,

- Written warning
- Temporary suspension
- Removal from the program