PAN AMERICAN SPORTS ORGANIZATION

GUIDANCE KIT

SAFE SPORT
COMMISSION

IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFE SPORT AND WELLBEING FOR NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEES OF THE PAN AMERICAN REGION

2026

PANAM SPORTS

HOW TO USE THIS KIT

The wellbeing, safety, and rights of athletes are the fundamental core of sport administration and practice in the 21st century. Safe Sport is defined as an environment based on fairness and respect, free from any form of harassment, abuse, discrimination, and mistreatment toward anyone who is part of the sport ecosystem. Panam Sports, in alignment with the international standards of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), reaffirms its commitment to placing athletes at the center of the Olympic Movement, ensuring that their sporting experience is, above all, a formative and protected one.

This manual has been designed as a **guidance kit and practical tool** for National Olympic Committees (NOCs) across the Pan American region to implement solid institutional Safe Sport actions in a progressive and sustainable way. Through this roadmap, NOCs will be able to move forward based on the following key pillars:

- **Building education:** Education is considered the "transformative right" and the cornerstone of any Safe Sport strategy. For National Olympic Committees (NOCs), educational actions must be comprehensive, evidence-based, and directed at every level of the organization, with the aim of establishing educational programs as the cornerstone of the strategy, training athletes, technical staff, and leaders so they understand their rights and know how to identify and prevent prohibited conduct.
- **Establishing offices and responsible officers:** Facilitate the formal appointment of a Safe Sport Officer (SSO), a specifically trained figure who acts with independence and confidentiality to manage the implementation of safeguards.
- **Developing manuals and protocols:** Provide operational models for creating effective reporting and response protocols that allow swift and respectful action in response to any detected violation.
- **Institutional policies:** Guide the drafting and approval of high-level regulations that include institutional commitment statements and clearly define the consequences of violations.

Protecting athletes is a shared responsibility that requires leadership at every level of the organization. With an eye toward strategic commitments, such as those established for the Lima 2027 Pan American Games, these tools will help NOCs close current gaps and ensure that sport is always a safe space for human and social interaction and development.

This **Guidance Kit** has been designed as a fundamental practical tool for National Olympic Committees (NOCs) across the Pan American region to advance the implementation of solid Safe Sport structures. Its purpose is to facilitate the adoption of international standards and ensure that the sporting experience is formative, safe, and grounded in a rights-based perspective for all its participants.

To achieve a progressive and sustainable implementation, the kit is organized into **eight strategic modules** covering everything from the legal foundations to operational management at major events:

MODULES 1·2

Regulatory Framework and Institutional Assessment

MODULES 3·4

Policy Design and Roles of Responsibility

These focus on drafting and approving institutional regulations and on the formal appointment of the

These modules establish the theoretical and ethical foundation, including commitments to the IOC and Panam Sports, and provide a self-assessment tool for each organization to identify its current situation and the gaps it must close.

Safe Sport Officer (SSO), who acts as the central figure for managing implementation and reported cases.

MODULES 5·6

Protocols and Operational Implementation

These address the creation of effective reporting channels and the development of a detailed **Training Plan**, with specific content for athletes, technical staff, and leadership.

MODULES 7·8

Monitoring, Reporting, and the Roadmap to Lima 2027

These define key performance indicators and establish a schedule of concrete actions to ensure that all NOCs meet protection requirements ahead of the upcoming Pan American Games.

Through these components, the manual seeks to transform the organizational culture of the Panam Sports member National Olympic Committees, integrating education and protection as unmovable pillars of Pan American sport management

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MODULE 1

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND COMMITMENTS

1.1 What Is Safe Sport

1.1 What Is Safe Sport?

Safe Sport is defined as a sporting environment based on respect, fairness, and the protection of human rights, where everyone can take part in a sporting experience free from any form of harassment, abuse, discrimination, and mistreatment. It is not simply the absence of violence, but the active creation of an ecosystem where the wellbeing, safety, and rights of athletes are the central consideration in the administration and practice of sport.

For effective implementation within National Olympic Committees (NOCs), the concept must be understood through the following fundamental pillars:

- **Inclusive Scope and Duty of Care:** Safe Sport recognizes that there is a "duty of care" to protect everyone in sport, regardless of their role or age. It is vital to understand that vulnerability does not disappear upon turning 18; policies must therefore be inclusive and also address the transition from childhood to adulthood, providing protection for both athletes and participants in Panam Sports Games, events and activities, and administrative staff, since anyone in the sport ecosystem can be a victim and/or a perpetrator.
- **The Minor Premise:** In the case of children and adolescents, it must always be kept in mind that an athlete is, above all, **a child**. Many violence-related problems arise from forgetting this premise and applying adult methods or demands during formative stages. It is therefore essential to be aware of each NOC's current national legislation, as well as international standards on childhood, and to

provide the necessary duty of care to all underage athletes, taking minimum care standards into account.

- **Identifying Non-Accidental Violence:** According to the IOC Consensus Statement, Safe Sport seeks to prevent five main forms of harm: **psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, neglect, and harassment**. These behaviors can occur through physical contact, verbally, or through digital means (cyberbullying).
- **Power Dynamics and Vulnerability:** Harassment and abuse are usually the result of power imbalances. A safe environment identifies and minimizes the risks associated with these imbalances, taking into account intersectionality factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation, which can increase the vulnerability of certain athletes.
- **Comprehensive Prevention and Response:** Safe Sport encompasses both prevention (education, codes of conduct, personnel screening, and communication) and an effective response to violations (confidential reporting channels, investigation, victim support, and disciplinary sanctions).

> **IN CONCLUSION**
>
> The goal is to transform NOCs' organizational culture to eradicate the "win at all costs" mentality and the misunderstood power asymmetry that allows harassment to occur, replacing it with a system of solid safeguards and clear protocols.

1.2 Mandatory International Framework

Implementation Considerations

CATEGORY	INSTRUMENT / REGULATION	OBJECTIVE AND RELEVANCE	ACTION FOR THE NOC
Olympic and Paralympic Movement	**IOC Safeguarding Framework (2021)**	Sets the minimum protection standards for all Olympic organizations.	Implement the mandatory minimum requirements established by the IOC on safeguarding.
	IOC Consensus Statement (2016)	Defines the five forms of harm (physical, psychological, sexual, neglect, and harassment) and mandates their prevention.	Incorporate these official definitions into internal regulations and use them in training programs.
	IOC Guidelines (Bronze, Silver, Gold)	Provides a roadmap for scaling up the level of protection, from the minimum (Bronze) to excellence (Gold).	Meet the standards of **Bronze level** (reporting mechanism, designated officer) before advancing to higher levels.
	Code of Ethics / Agenda 2020	Places the athlete at the center and requires the explicit rejection of any form of mistreatment.	Include the formal rejection of harassment and abuse in the NOC's statutes or Code of Ethics.
	Panam Sports Safe Sport Policy	Sets specific requirements for participation in regional games.	Accredit the appointment of a Safe Sport Officer (SSO) and an approved policy for Lima 2027.

CATEGORY	INSTRUMENT / REGULATION	OBJECTIVE AND RELEVANCE	ACTION FOR THE NOC
Human Rights (UN)	**Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**	Legal framework that protects minors against violence and guarantees their right to play.	Adopt the **"best interests of the child"** perspective and create specific protocols for minors under 18.
Global Technical Standards	**International Safeguards for Adults (SSI)**	Extends the "duty of care" to those over 18, addressing their vulnerability.	Develop specific regulations for adults that include protection for reporting parties and misconduct management.
	Safe Sport International Principles	10 principles that place athlete safety as the central consideration.	Sign a **declaration of adherence** to these principles as the ethical foundation of sport management.
Cooperation and Regional Frameworks	**International Charter of Physical Education (UNESCO)**	Underscores the institutional responsibility to protect participants from any harm.	Use UNESCO's supporting materials to enrich the institutional training plan.
	Current National Legislation	Local laws protecting against workplace and sexual abuse or harassment.	Ensure that internal protocols are aligned with legal reporting obligations to public authorities in the country.

- **Approval at the highest level:** All of these actions must be approved by the NOC's highest authority (General Assembly or Executive Board) to have legal and operational validity.
- **Participatory consultation:** When drafting these policies and actions, it is strongly recommended to consult the NOC's Athletes' Commission to ensure their voices are heard.
- **Reporting:** Progress on these actions must be recorded annually for submission to Panam Sports using the official format.

1.3 Concrete Commitments Toward Lima 2027

Panam Sports has established that, to guarantee a protected environment throughout the Olympic cycle, all participating National Olympic Committees (NOCs) must demonstrate compliance with the following commitments ahead of the Lima 2027 Pan American Games:

1. **Formal Appointment of a Safe Sport Officer (SSO):**
   Each NOC must appoint an officer with specific safeguarding training, who will act as the central point of contact for managing cases and coordinating policy implementation. The SSO must hold a specialized level of training, in a related profession (minimum 20 hours), and act independently to avoid conflicts of interest.
2. **Approval and Adoption of the Institutional Policy:**
   Have Safe Sport regulations formally approved by the NOC's highest authority (General Assembly or Executive Board). This policy must be clear, accessible, and must have been drafted in consultation with the Athletes' Commission.
3. **Operational Reporting and Response Protocols:**
   Establish reporting channels that guarantee **confidentiality and anonymity**. The protocol must detail the steps from receiving the complaint through to resolution, including protective measures for the reporting party and the psychological support needed for the possible victim.

4. **Implementation of the Tiered Training Plan:**
   Implement mandatory educational programs based on the NOC's level of Safe Sport policy implementation, differentiated by role: workshops for athletes (rights and reporting), training for coaches (relational boundaries and warning signs), and sessions for officials (institutional responsibility). The goal is for 100% of the delegation traveling to Lima 2027 to be trained, at least with basic Safe Sport information.
5. **Adoption of Codes of Conduct and Ethics:**
   Incorporate into the institutional statutes an explicit rejection of any form of harassment, abuse, and mistreatment. Ideally, all members of the sporting environment (doctors, officials, technical staff) should sign a code of conduct defining acceptable behavior standards and minimum safety standards.
6. **Safe Hiring Mechanisms and Risk Management:**
   Implement criminal background checks for all staff and volunteers who work directly with athletes, as a fundamental preventive measure.
7. **Annual Reporting and Monitoring System:**
   Submit an annual status report to Panam Sports detailing the state of policy implementation, training activities carried out, and the number of cases managed, following the official reporting format.

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MODULE 2

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

The first fundamental step in building a protected sporting environment is the exercise of institutional self-reflection.

Before designing policies or protocols, each National Olympic Committee (NOC) must carry out an honest and rigorous analysis of its current situation. The **Institutional Assessment** is a self-assessment tool designed to identify the organization's **"starting point"**, allowing it to map both existing strengths and the gaps that must be closed urgently.

It is important to note that this assessment is neither a test nor a punitive audit; there are no "bad results." On the contrary, obtaining a clear and accurate picture of the institution allows it to:

- **Prioritize actions:** Focus resources and efforts on the areas of greatest vulnerability.
- **Establish a baseline:** Create a reference point to measure progress and policy effectiveness over time.
- **Motivate change:** Encourage internal reflection and generate the political will needed to introduce improvements in the organizational culture.
- **Personalize the roadmap:** Adjust the timelines and goals of the Action Plan toward Lima 2027 according to each NOC's level of maturity (Bronze, Silver, or Gold).

This assessment process should involve not only leadership, but ideally should consult various stakeholders, including athletes and technical staff, to ensure that the institutional perception matches the reality experienced in the field of sport. Upon completing this module, the NOC will have the

evidence needed to present its situation to the Executive Board and formalize a solid commitment to Safe Sport.

2.1 Current Status Checklist

DIMENSION ASSESSED	YES	PARTIAL	NO
1. A formal, approved Safe Sport policy exists	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
2. A person has been designated as responsible for Safe Sport	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
3. An accessible, confidential reporting channel exists	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
4. Safe Sport training has been conducted in the last 2 years	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
5. Athletes know what Safe Sport is	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
6. Technical staff have received training in Safe Sport and Wellbeing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
7. Written protocols exist for case management	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
8. Regular reports on Safe Sport are submitted to Panam Sports	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
9. The policy provides special protection for underage athletes	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
10. Internal regulations sanction harassment and abuse	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
11. An institutional reporting policy exists	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
12. A Safe Sport policy exists for major sporting events	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
13. Safeguard documentation exists for situations involving minors (medical care, accommodations, etc.)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
14. Prevention and awareness campaigns for Safe Sport and Wellbeing exist	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

2.2 Interpreting the Assessment

RESULT	SITUATION AND NEXT STEP
11-14 YES	Advanced NOC. Focus on formal documentation, expand prevention and educational campaigns, and reporting to Panam Sports.
7-10 YES or PARTIAL	NOC in progress. Close the gaps identified using this kit.
Fewer than 7 YES	NOC at an initial stage. Follow the complete roadmap in this kit starting from Module 3.

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MODULE 3

DESIGNING THE INSTITUTIONAL POLICY

What the Policy Must Contain

3.1 Conceptual and Ethical Framework

The policy is not merely a set of rules, but a **statement of intent** that demonstrates the organization's commitment to preventing anyone from being harmed. It must be drafted clearly, accessibly, and in a way that is easy to understand at every level of the organization.

3.2 Essential Components of the Policy

For a Safe Sport policy to be robust and meet international standards, it must contain at least the following elements:

1. **Institutional Commitment Statement:**
   A formal text in which the NOC reaffirms that the wellbeing of the sport ecosystem is paramount and central to its Olympic mission, stating that sport development at every level must seek the greatest wellbeing of everyone involved.
2. **Clear Definitions of Prohibited Conduct:**
   Must align with the IOC Consensus Statement and national legislation, defining the five main forms of harm: **physical, psychological, and sexual violence, neglect, and harassment**.
3. **Scope of Application (Who Does It Protect?):**
   Must apply to everyone, that is, to the "sport ecosystem" connected to the organization (administrative staff, volunteers, athletes, technical staff, accredited media, and officials).
4. **Inclusive and Intersectional Approach:**
   The policy must recognize that certain groups (based on gender, race, disability, or sexual orientation) may be contextually more vulnerable and require specific protective measures.
5. **Reporting and Response Mechanisms:**
   Detail reporting channels that guarantee **confidentiality and, if requested, anonymity for the reporting party**, specifying the initial response timeframes and the steps to follow after a disclosure; it is important to note that reports are not truly anonymous, but rather that the information is safeguarded.
6. **Structure of Responsibilities:**
   Identify who is responsible for leading the safeguarding work (the SSO) and clarify that senior leadership holds ultimate responsibility for overseeing implementation.
7. **Disciplinary Procedure and Sanctions:**
   Establish a clear disciplinary path, with sanctions proportional to the severity of the offense, always guaranteeing **due process** (the right to be heard) for all parties involved, taking into account the NOC's scope of jurisdiction and that of the sport federations under that entity.

3.3 Specific Risk Situations

The policy must include guidelines or codes of conduct for managing high-risk situations identified in sport, such as:

- **Travel and transport:** Rules on overnight stays and supervision.
- **Locker rooms and privacy areas:** Guarantee the privacy of athletes and technical and administrative staff.
- **Interpersonal relationships:** Clear guidelines on intimate relationships between organization staff and athletes.
- **Use of technology:** Guidelines on social media and digital communications.

3.4 Approval and Review Process

- **Athlete Participation:** The policy must have been drafted in consultation with the NOC's athletes commission to ensure that the athletes' voices and real needs are incorporated.
- **Formalization:** Must be officially approved by the **NOC's highest authority** (General Assembly or Executive Board) and incorporated into its statutes or regulations to have internal legal validity.
- **Periodic Review:** An update schedule must be established to adapt to changes in national legislation or international standards.

The specific risk situations that must be included are detailed below:

1. TRAVEL, TRANSPORT, AND ACCOMMODATION

Travel and time spent away from home are moments of particular vulnerability due to close cohabitation and a possible lack of adequate supervision.

- **Overnight stays:** Clear rules must be established on who may share a room, and adults must be prohibited from sharing a bed or room with minors.
- **Lack of privacy:** In temporary accommodations, it is critical to address the possible lack of private spaces and ensure that delegations (including athletes and staff of both sexes) have safe environments.

2. PRIVACY SPACES: LOCKER ROOMS AND RESTROOMS

These areas are considered high-risk within the sporting context.

- **Access and supervision:** The policy must regulate who has access to these areas and under what maintenance and safety conditions.
- **Protection of privacy:** The ability of everyone to maintain their privacy must be guaranteed, and the use of cameras or recording devices in these areas must be prohibited.

3. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Harassment is often the result of **power imbalances** (e.g., coach-athlete) that must be managed proactively.

- **Intimate relationships:** It is essential to have clear guidelines that prohibit or regulate romantic or sexual relationships between organization staff and athletes, due to the conflict of interest and the risk of abuse of authority.
- **Child grooming:** Suspicious behaviors must be identified and reported, such as when an adult gives gifts or seeks to spend time alone with an athlete outside of training hours.

4. TRAINING AND HEALTH PRACTICES

- **Initiation rites or "hazing":** The policy must explicitly prohibit any initiation practice that is humiliating, degrading, or dangerous.
- **Extreme demands:** Excessive training that does not match the athlete's maturity level must be avoided, as must the imposition of **extreme nutritional regimes** to achieve a specific body type, which can lead to eating disorders or physical abuse.
- **Doping and performance pressure:** The use of illegal substances and excessive pressure to win at any cost are factors that increase the risk of physical and psychological harm.

5. DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGIES

- **Social media:** Guidelines are needed on the appropriate use of information and communication technologies between staff and athletes to prevent cyberbullying or the sending of inappropriate content.

6. RISKS FROM SPECIFIC VULNERABILITIES

The policy must recognize that certain groups face additional barriers or risks:

- **Athletes with disabilities:** Uninformed assumptions about their care needs must be avoided, and the exploitation of their dependence on support staff for transport or communication must be prevented.
- **Intersectionality:** Specific risks related to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status, which can increase the vulnerability of certain participants, must be addressed.

> **PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATION**
>
> For each of these situations, the NOC must develop specific **codes of conduct** that define minimum standards of acceptable behavior and the consequences of non-compliance.

Suggested Table: "Policy Checklist"

Upon completing this design, the NOC can use this checklist to validate its work:

QUALITY QUESTION	MEETS (YES/NO)
Does the policy establish that the wellbeing of athletes and technical and administrative staff is paramount?	
Does it include clear definitions of harassment, abuse, and mistreatment?	
Does it formally identify the NOC's Safe Sport Officer (SSO) and their responsibilities?	
Does it describe a confidential reporting mechanism?	
Was there consultation with the Athletes' Commission, coaches, and administrative staff before its approval?	
Is it signed and approved by the NOC's highest authority?	
Is there a clear policy that establishes the NOC's framework for action?	
Is there a body to which cases received by the NOC can be referred, whether at the federation or sport level?	

3.2 Institutional Statement Template

TEMPLATE — INSTITUTIONAL SAFE SPORT STATEMENT

*This statement must be signed by the highest authority of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) and, preferably, incorporated into the institutional **statutes** or **Code of Ethics** to give it greater administrative and legal weight.*

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The National Olympic Committee of **[COUNTRY]**, as the leading organization of the Olympic Movement in our territory, recognizes that the **wellbeing, safety, and rights of all athletes** are the central consideration in the administration and practice of sport.

Our Commitments:

1. **Priority of Wellbeing:** We reaffirm that protecting the physical, psychological, and social integrity of the sport ecosystem prevails over any performance goal or sporting result.
2. **Inclusive Scope:** This policy protects everyone connected to our organization (athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, medical staff, and accredited media), recognizing that everyone has an equal right to protection, regardless of age.
3. **Focus on Children:** We adopt the principle of the **best interests of the child**, ensuring that underage athletes are treated, above all, as children with specific rights to protection and fair play.
4. **Absolute Rejection of Violence:** We maintain a position of **zero tolerance** toward the five forms of non-accidental violence: physical, psychological, sexual, neglect, and harassment.
5. **Intersectionality:** We recognize and commit to mitigating the specific risks faced by contextually vulnerable groups due to their gender, disability, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
6. **Safe Reporting Culture:** We commit to maintaining an environment where open discussion about wellbeing is encouraged and where **independent, confidential reporting channels** exist that protect the rights of victims and reporting parties.
7. **Due Process:** We guarantee that any report will be treated with respect, investigated promptly by the competent authorities, and resolved through fair and transparent disciplinary procedures by the relevant entity.

Formalization: This statement was approved by the **[General Assembly / Executive Board]** on the **[DAY]** of **[MONTH]**, **[YEAR]**, and its implementation will be overseen annually by the Safe Sport Officer (SSO) and reported to Panam Sports.

Signed by:

_____

[Full Name] President of the National Olympic Committee COUNTRY

Suggestions for Strengthening the Statement:

- **Athlete Participation:** Before final signature, the template should be reviewed with the sport ecosystem to ensure their real needs have been incorporated.

- **Public Disclosure:** Once signed, the institutional position must be communicated not only internally, but also to **fans and spectators** at official events.
- **Updating:** A commitment to periodically review this document should be included, to adapt it to changes in national legislation or international standards.

MODULE 4

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Safe Sport Officer (SSO)

The **Safe Sport Officer (SSO)** is the central figure and driving force of the institutional protection strategy. Their main mission is to lead the safeguarding work, ensuring that athlete wellbeing is always the foremost consideration in all of the organization's decisions.

A. Suggested Profile and Competencies

For the SSO to carry out their work effectively, they must have a balanced technical and human profile, taking the following into account:

- **Academic Background:** A professional background in areas such as psychology, social work, law, or related disciplines is recommended, to facilitate the handling of sensitive situations, along with knowledge of Safe Sport and Wellbeing topics.
- **Specialized Training:** Must hold specific Safe Sport training of at least 20 hours, including training in case management, international regulations and/or work in related fields, and at least basic knowledge of the dynamics of high-performance sport.
- **Soft Skills:** Empathy, active listening skills, crisis management, and an unwavering commitment to confidentiality.

B. Key Functions of the SSO

The SSO does not simply wait to receive complaints; their role is preventive, proactive, and reactive:

1. **Educational and prevention campaigns:**
   Leads the NOC's prevention campaigns and educational milestones related to Safe Sport and Wellbeing, organizing activities aimed at educating people about the phenomena of violence and preventing them in sporting contexts.
2. **Receiving and Managing Reports:**
   Acts as the central point of contact for receiving reports of harassment, abuse, or mistreatment, ensuring that each case is securely recorded and referring it to the relevant entities depending on the case brought to their attention.
3. **Coordinating the Response:**
   In cases involving the NOC, leads the initial investigation procedure and coordinates referrals to disciplinary commissions to ensure due process is followed.

4. **Support for Those Involved:**
   Provides guidance and support to anyone who needs it, including possible victims, volunteers, or employees affected during and after an incident.
5. **Liaison With Authorities:**
   Must be familiar with **local mandatory reporting laws** and know when and how to refer cases to public authorities (police, social services) in situations that constitute crimes.
6. **Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:**
   Review cases that have occurred to identify gaps in institutional policy and propose updates and continuous improvement to the Executive Board.

C. Ethical and Independence Requirements

To guarantee the integrity of the system, the SSO must operate under two non-negotiable principles:

- **Independence:** The SSO must remain independent from the high-performance chain of command and technical areas to avoid conflicts of interest when receiving reports about coaches or officials. Ideally, they should report directly to the NOC's Secretary General or Executive Board.
- **Confidentiality:** All sensitive information received must be handled under strict privacy protocols, disclosed only to those strictly necessary for taking action or resolving the case.

D. Visibility and Accessibility

The existence of the SSO must be actively communicated. Athletes and staff must be able to quickly find out **who they are and how to contact them**. Their contact details must appear on the NOC's website, in delegation manuals, and on visible signage at training centers.

> **ADVICE FOR THE NOC**
>
> To ensure that the SSO does not feel isolated in their role, the NOC must guarantee access to external specialist advice and a support network (such as the Pan American SSO Network) for exchanging best practices and consulting on complex cases.

4.2 Structure of Responsibilities

It is essential to define a clear chain of command that not only assigns tasks but also establishes accountability at every level of the organization. Protection is not the exclusive responsibility of one person, but a commitment shared across the entire sporting environment.

Below is a proposal for an expanded and detailed structure, incorporating best practices from the IOC and Safe Sport International. For safeguarding to be effective, every member of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) must understand their specific role in preventing and responding to harassment and abuse.

LEVEL	ROLE	MAIN RESPONSIBILITY AND KEY TASKS
Governance (Highest Level)	President / Executive Board	**Leadership and oversight:** Formally approve institutional policy, ensure the allocation of financial and human resources, and guarantee that athlete wellbeing takes priority over performance.
Operational Management	Secretary General / Executive Directorate	**Operational integration:** Incorporate safeguards into human resources processes, ensure **criminal background checks** for all staff and volunteers, and manage accreditation requirements for games.

LEVEL	ROLE	MAIN RESPONSIBILITY AND KEY TASKS
Technical Leadership	Safe Sport Officer (SSO)	Lead the implementation of the action and education plan, receive reports confidentially, provide support to victims and to anyone who requests it, and act as liaison with external authorities and Panam Sports.
Delegations at Events	Chef de Mission / Coordinators	Be the first point of contact at the Villages and major multi-sport events, disseminate the policy among the delegation, and be able to activate emergency protocols in coordination with the SSO.
Direct Environment (Field)	Coaches and Technical Staff	Act as role models, establish clear relational boundaries, detect early warning signs of harm, and apply codes of conduct in day-to-day training.
Active Participants	Athletes	Know their rights, take part in the review of institutional policies and training, and report inappropriate conduct or safety concerns for themselves or their teammates.
Specialist Advisory	Medical, Legal, or Ethics Commissions	Provide specialized expertise for managing complex cases and ensure that the NOC's actions comply with current national legislation.

Additional Considerations for Strengthening the Structure

- **Independence of the Reporting System:** It is recommended that the complaint-receiving system be managed by people who maintain a prudent distance from technical leadership, to reduce conflicts of interest, especially in cases involving high-performance coaches or senior officials.
- **Extended Duty of Care:** The structure must recognize that "duty of care" applies to everyone involved, including vulnerable adults and those transitioning from childhood to adulthood, ensuring that safeguards are consistent and adaptable across all developmental stages.
- **Focus on the "Best Interests of the Child":** Institutions and their leaders must be aware of the complexity of today's sporting environment and be prepared to coordinate regulations that make sport a genuine space for human development, avoiding the "win at any cost" mentality.
- **Collaboration With Partners:** The organization must work with external partners (NGOs, social services, police authorities) to adopt a systematic, multidisciplinary approach to protecting athletes.

4.3 Specific Responsibilities for Games Delegations

It is essential to move from a list of administrative requirements to an operational protection plan during multi-sport events. Delegations face increased risks due to travel, shared accommodation, and competitive pressure.

The period during which the Games take place requires a specific protection framework that ensures athletes and participants know that their safety is the organization's absolute priority.

A. The Role of the Chef de Mission and Coordinators

The Chef de Mission is the delegation's highest authority and the main guarantor of a safe environment on the ground:

- **Protocol Activation:** Must have the information needed to immediately activate the action protocols in response to any incident related to Safe Sport and wellbeing.

- **Ethical Leadership:** Must act as a role model and ensure that all officials and technical staff strictly comply with codes of conduct at accommodation, transport, and training venues.
- **Ongoing Communication:** Is responsible for ensuring that the Safe Sport message remains present in the delegation's daily meetings.

B. Point of Contact and Safeguarding Officer at the Games

Each NOC must ensure the presence of an identifiable safeguarding figure within the delegation:

- **Point of Contact in the Village and Accommodations:** The person responsible for managing urgent situations in person must be designated and clearly communicated.
- **Accessibility and Gender:** Ideally, the delegation should have protection officers of both sexes to make reporting parties more comfortable and confident.
- **Direct Channel With the SSO:** There must be an uninterrupted line of communication between staff at the Games and the NOC's Safe Sport Officer (SSO) in the home country for legal and technical guidance.

C. Communication Strategy During Competition

Communication during the Games must be simple, positive, and effective to avoid generating fear, focusing on the sport ecosystem's right to be protected:

- **Pre-Departure Briefing:** Mandatory 2-hour session before departure to review behavior protocols at the Games, reporting procedures, emergency contacts, and rules of coexistence.
- **Visibility Materials:** Distribution of information indicating the staff responsible for each area, how to identify risk situations, where to direct questions, and how to file a report.
- **Multiple Reporting Channels:** Athletes must know that, if they have a concern, they can approach not only the SSO but also delegation members or trusted staff.

D. Managing Logistical Risks (High-Risk Situations)

The delegation must implement specific guidelines to mitigate risks in shared environments:

- **Accommodation and Travel:** Clear rules on overnight stays, a prohibition on adults and minors sharing rooms, and a guarantee of privacy in rest areas.
- **Privacy Spaces:** Supervision and access rules for locker rooms and medical areas to prevent any form of harassment or abuse.
- **Digital Environments:** Guidelines on the use of social media and electronic communications during the Games to prevent cyberbullying.

E. Emergency Action Plan

In the event of a disclosure or report during the Games, the delegation must follow three immediate steps:

1. **Victim Protection:**
   Prioritize the physical safety and immediate support of the affected person.
2. **Reporting to Panam Sports:**
   Inform the Games Safeguarding Officer (Lima 2027) following the procedures established by the Organizing Committee.
3. **Coordination With Authorities:**
   If the incident constitutes a crime under the host jurisdiction's legislation, coordinate referral to the competent local authorities together with the SSO and the legal team.

MODULE 5

REPORTING AND RESPONSE PROTOCOL

5.1 Principles of the Protocol

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
Confidentiality	The identity of the reporting party is protected at every stage of the process
Timeliness	The SSO must acknowledge receipt within 48 hours and provide an initial response within 5 business days
Non-Retaliation	Any sanction or pressure against anyone who reports in good faith is prohibited
Best Interests	In cases involving minors, the best interests of the child prevail over any other institutional consideration, always assessing the timely provision of information to the adults responsible for that minor.
Documentation	All steps of the process are securely recorded by the SSO

5.2 Protocol Steps

It is essential not merely to list the stages, but to detail the procedural safeguards and technical actions the Safe Sport Officer (SSO) must carry out at each one, based on IOC and Safe Sport International standards.

The operational protocol is divided into clear phases that guarantee confidentiality, due process, and priority protection of the victim.

STEP 1 Receiving the Report or Concern

- **Action:** The affected person, a third party, or a *whistleblower* submits the report through official channels (digital form, email, or phone line).
- **Guarantees:** The option of **anonymity** must be offered, and the intake system must be managed by someone who reduces conflicts of interest (ideally the SSO with technical independence). Reports about events that are not recent must also be accepted.

STEP 2 Acknowledgment of Receipt and Secure Recording

- **Action:** The SSO confirms receipt within a maximum of **48 hours** and assigns a confidential case number for follow-up.
- **Guarantee:** All information must be kept in a secure record under strict privacy protocols to protect the sensitivity of the data.

STEP 3 Initial Assessment and Triage

- **Action:** The SSO reviews the report to determine its severity and nature within **5 business days**.
- **Assessment criteria:**

1. **Jurisdiction:** Determine whether the matter falls under the NOC's regulations or must be referred to the Federation and/or external authorities.
2. **Crime:** If illicit activity is suspected (especially sexual abuse or abuse against minors), the competent **public authorities must be informed** in accordance with national legislation.
3. **Intersectionality:** Assess whether there are additional risks based on the disability, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation of those involved.

STEP 4 Immediate Protective Measures (Precautionary)

- **Action:** If there is an imminent risk to the reporting party or possible victim, the SSO must recommend precautionary separation measures from the alleged perpetrator, or measures to protect the physical and psychological integrity of the parties.

STEP 5 Investigation and Information Gathering

- **Action:** Where applicable, the SSO coordinates the internal investigation to gather testimony and evidence (messages, documents, witnesses).
- **Limit:** Sport organizations **must not investigate crimes**; NOCs must first assess whether or not they have the competence to investigate and sanction with regard to the case in question, and if not, determine how to refer the case and follow up on it.

STEP 6 Disciplinary Procedure and "Fair Process"

- **Action:** The case file is referred to the Sport Federation, the Disciplinary Commission, or the responsible body.
- **Due Process Guarantees:**
  - **Notification:** Where applicable, the accused person must be formally informed of the charges against them.
  - **Right to Be Heard:** Give the accused the opportunity to present their defense before any sanction is applied.

STEP 7 Resolution, Sanction, and Notification

- **Action:** Formal communication of the findings to all parties involved.
- **Sanctions:** Must be **proportional** to the severity of the offense, taking into account aggravating factors such as the victim being a minor. Information on the **appeals** process must also be provided.

STEP 8 Follow-Up and Case Closure

- **Action:** The SSO conducts follow-up monitoring to ensure the reporting party's wellbeing, prevent retaliation, and verify compliance with the sanctions imposed.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Use (anonymized) case data to assess gaps in institutional policy and propose preventive improvements.

5.3 Reporting Form — Minimum Fields

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
Reporting party's details	Name (optional if anonymity is requested), relationship to the NOC, contact method
Description of the incident	What happened, when, where, who was present
Person(s) involved	Institutional role of the person alleged to have committed the conduct

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
Available evidence	Documents, messages, witnesses (formal proof not required)
Measures required	If the person feels they are at immediate risk, indicate whether immediate precautionary protective measures are required, and specific requests related to the case

PANAM SPORTS

MODULE 6

TRAINING PLAN

It is essential to go beyond the mere transmission of information and turn education into a **"transformative right"** capable of changing organizational cultures. Based on the international standards of the IOC, Safe Sport International, and UNICEF, this module must be structured around an interactive, inclusive, and results-oriented approach.

Before running the workshops, the NOC must define the depth and frequency of the training:

- **Depth:** Depending on each NOC's level of progress, a distinction should be made between a general overview (for athletes, administrative staff, and technical staff) and an in-depth understanding of protecting vulnerable groups (for technical staff, officials, athletes, and medical personnel).
- **Frequency:** Determine whether the training will be a one-time event or will require continuous learning (ongoing professional development) to stay current with legal changes.
- **Mandatory Nature:** Panam Sports establishes that training is mandatory for accreditation; this requires a strict control mechanism to verify compliance.

6.2 Tiered Training Table

AUDIENCE	REINFORCED CONTENT	SUGGESTED FORMAT
Athletes	Rights, consent, boundaries, and recognizing support systems.	3-hour interactive workshops using case studies.
Coaches	**Power dynamics**, managing locker rooms/travel, and warning signs (*grooming*).	6-hour in-person training + behavior self-assessment.
SSO	**Case management**, victim support, local reporting laws, and coordination with regional networks.	20+ hour specialized certification (IOC/Panam Sports).
Leadership	Governance, legal liability for negligence, and **resource allocation**.	2-hour information sessions with institutional risk analysis.
Families / Fans	Abuse prevention, eliminating violence in the stands, and wellbeing support.	Communication campaigns and short "Respect in Sport" guides.

6.3 Methodology: "Situations to Learn From"

Following the UNICEF model, it is recommended to include field exercises that prepare staff for real risks:

1. **Reporting Drills:**
   Practice the steps of the protocol before an incident occurs, to detect communication failures.
2. **Conflict Management:**
   Use a six-step guide (identify needs, define the problem, propose solutions, evaluate, choose, and apply) to resolve friction on the field of play without violence.
3. **Training in Risk Situations:**
   Specific training on how to act during **travel, overnight stays, and in locker rooms**, where vulnerability is greatest.

6.4 Educational Resources and Partnerships

To strengthen its impact, the NOC should draw on resources that already exist:

- **IOC Safeguarding e-learning:** A free course accessible to all members.
- **External Certifications:** Models such as *Respect Group* (Canada) or university partnerships (such as the one held by the Czech Olympic Committee) to professionalize future leaders.
- **Athlete Voice:** Involve athletes in **developing educational content** to ensure it aligns with their real needs.

6.5 Educational Material Checklist

Before finalizing the plan's design, make sure the following quality points are met:

- ❑ Were athletes consulted about the content?
- ❑ Were all forms of harassment and abuse defined in the policy included?
- ❑ Is the format accessible to people with disabilities?
- ❑ Is it made clear, at the end of each session, whom to report to and how?
- ❑ Did a third party or expert review the material before its launch?

> **KEY NOTE**
>
> Training must not only teach people "not to abuse," but must foster sporting styles centered on **athlete wellbeing** as the guiding principle of all administration.

6.1 Training Plan by Level

AUDIENCE	FORMAT	MINIMUM CONTENT	DURATION	DEADLINE
High-performance athletes	In-person or virtual workshop	Rights, prohibited conduct, how to report	3 hours	Year 1
Coaches and technical staff	In-person workshop + self-assessment	Recognizing warning signs, codes of conduct, relational boundaries	6 hours	Year 1
NOC leadership and officials	Information session + policy reading	Regulatory framework, institutional responsibilities	2 hours	Year 1

AUDIENCE	FORMAT	MINIMUM CONTENT	DURATION	DEADLINE
Safe Sport Officer	Specialized training (Panam Sports / IOC)	Case management, confidentiality, external coordination	20+ hours	Year 1
Chefs de Mission / delegations	Online module + pre-Games briefing	Reporting protocol at the Games, emergency contacts	2 hours	Year 2
New NOC hires	Institutional induction	Presentation of the policy and reporting channels	1 hour	Ongoing

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MODULE 7

MONITORING AND REPORTING

7.1 Monitoring Indicators

The NOC must record and periodically report the following indicators:

INDICATOR	MEASUREMENT FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Policy approved by highest authority (YES/NO)	Annual	Secretary General
% of delegation athletes trained	Semiannual	SSO
% of technical staff trained	Semiannual	SSO
Reports received and resolution status	Quarterly (confidential)	SSO
Average initial response time to reports	Semiannual	SSO
Report submitted to Panam Sports (YES/NO)	Annual	Secretary General

7.2 Annual Report to Panam Sports

It is essential that this document stop being seen merely as an administrative formality and instead become a **strategic tool for continuous improvement** and institutional accountability.

The report must be submitted by the NOC's Secretary General and consolidate the work led by the Safe Sport Officer (SSO). For Lima 2027, this report is a fundamental accreditation requirement.

1. Executive Summary of Implementation

- **Policy Status:** Confirm the status of the policy's development, actions carried out, whether it was reviewed in the past year, and whether it has the backing of the highest authority.
- **Milestones Achieved:** Summary of the main achievements of the period (e.g., training sessions, opening of the SSO office, signing of agreements with external experts).

2. Analysis of Quantitative Indicators (Based on Module 7.1)

Must include a comparative table with the previous year's targets:

- **Training Coverage:** Percentage of athletes, technical staff, and officials trained.
- **Case Management:** Total number of reports received, categorized by type (physical, psychological, sexual, neglect, harassment) and their resolution status (under investigation, resolved with sanction, dismissed), always guaranteeing **absolute anonymity**.
- **Efficiency:** Average initial response time to reports.

3. Qualitative Component and "Athlete Voice"

A high-quality report (Gold standard) must include evidence of participation:

- **Consultations Held:** Brief description of how the opinions of the **Athletes' Commission** were incorporated into the review of safeguarding processes during the year.
- **Perception of Safety:** Survey results (if any) on whether athletes feel safer or better understand their rights.

4. Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Gaps Identified:** Honestly acknowledge the obstacles encountered (e.g., lack of financial resources, cultural resistance, geographic barriers).
- **Risk Management:** Analysis of how specific high-risk situations were addressed, such as international travel or locker room use.

5. Requests for Technical Support

- Space to request specific assistance from Panam Sports, the IOC, or the Pan American SSO Network on complex matters such as local reporting laws or the management of cases involving minors.

6. Action Plan for the Next Period

- Definition of priority goals for the following year, ensuring alignment with the **Roadmap to Lima 2027**.

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR THE NOC

- **Using Data for Improvement:** The data collected in the report is not only for Panam Sports; the NOC must use it internally for the **research and evaluation** of its own safe practices.
- **Public Transparency:** Although the detailed report is confidential to Panam Sports, it is recommended that the NOC annually publish a summarized, public version of its Safe Sport statistics to build trust within the sporting community and among sponsors.
- **Secure Archive:** The SSO must keep a secure record of all supporting evidence (attendance lists, copies of resolutions) for what is reported, in case of future follow-up audits.

MODULE 8

ROADMAP TO LIMA 2027

The following roadmap organizes all actions into an indicative two-year schedule. Each NOC can adapt it to its situation based on the results of the Module 2 assessment.

YEAR 1 — BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

QUARTER	KEY ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Q1	Complete the assessment (Module 2). Present the situation to the Executive Board.	Validated assessment and formal institutional commitment
Q2	Appoint the SSO. Begin the SSO's specialized training. Draft the institutional policy.	Active SSO and policy draft ready for approval
Q3	Approve the policy through the highest authority. Launch reporting channels. Train leadership.	Policy approved and in effect. Reporting channel operational
Q4	Train athletes and technical staff. First annual report to Panam Sports.	Basic training completed. Report submitted.

YEAR 2 (2026-2027) — CONSOLIDATION AND THE GAMES

QUARTER	KEY ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Q1	Review and update the policy. Train new NOC hires.	Updated policy. 100% of staff with basic training
Q2	Train Chefs de Mission and delegation coordinators. Protocol activation drill.	Delegations prepared for Lima 2027
Q3	Second annual report to Panam Sports. Safe Sport accreditation for Lima 2027.	Accreditation obtained. Delegation cleared
Q4 / Lima 2027	Implementation of the protocol during the Games. Activation of the SSO and emergency contacts.	Games conducted under Safe Sport standards

KEY RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

Reference Organizations

ORGANIZATION	AVAILABLE RESOURCE	CONTACT / WEBSITE
Panam Sports	Safe Sport Policy, SSO training, annual report	www.panam.sport
International Olympic Committee (IOC)	Safeguarding Framework, free e-learning, resource library	olympics.com/ioc/safeguarding
Pan American SSO Network	Community of practice, exchange of experiences, peer assistance	Coordinated by Panam Sports
UNICEF	Child protection resources applicable to sport	unicef.org

Basic Glossary

FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

- **Safe Sport:** Defined as a sporting environment based on fairness and respect, free from any form of harassment, abuse, discrimination, and mistreatment toward athletes, technical staff, and anyone in the sport ecosystem. It is not merely the absence of violence, but the active presence of conditions that protect human dignity.
- **Safeguarding:** The proactive system of measures designed to prevent, detect, and mitigate the risks of mistreatment in any of its forms. While wellbeing promotes the positive, safeguarding focuses specifically on protecting against harm.
- **Wellbeing:** A holistic state (physical, mental, and emotional) that allows an athlete to reach their full potential both within and outside of competition.
- **Duty of Care:** The legal and ethical responsibility of sport organizations to take reasonable measures to guarantee the safety and protection of everyone under their charge.

TYPES OF VIOLENCE AND RISK

- **Harassment and Abuse (Non-Accidental Violence):** A general term describing conduct that violates a person's integrity. It manifests mainly in five forms: **psychological, physical, and sexual violence, neglect, and harassment**.
- **Neglect:** When a person with a duty of care toward an athlete fails to provide a minimum level of attention, resulting in potential or actual harm (e.g., lack of hydration, training through serious injuries).
- **Intersectionality:** Recognition that certain groups may face increased risks of abuse due to the combination of identities such as gender, race, disability, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
- **Grooming:** A deliberate process in which an adult builds an emotional connection with a minor to gain their trust and that of those around them, with the ultimate goal of abusing them.

KEY ROLES AND FIGURES

- **Safe Sport Officer (SSO):** Person appointed by the NOC with specific training to manage the implementation of the policy and training, receive reports, and coordinate the institutional response to cases of mistreatment.

- **Athletes' Commission:** An essential advisory body that must take part in reviewing and designing safeguarding policies to ensure that the "athlete voice" is incorporated.
- **Stakeholders:** Everyone connected to the organization, including administrative staff, volunteers, athletes, technical staff, medical personnel, and accredited media.

PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

- **Best Interests of the Child:** A guiding principle mandating that, in any action relating to minors under 18, their wellbeing and development must be prioritized over any other interest (such as sporting performance).
- **Self-Determination:** The right of adults to make their own informed decisions regarding their participation and the reporting of incidents, respecting their autonomy.
- **Due Process:** The guarantee that any accused person has access to a fair, transparent disciplinary procedure and the right to be heard before any resolution.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- **NOC (National Olympic Committee):** A national Olympic organization and member of Panam Sports responsible for leading the Olympic movement in its country.
- **Lima 2027:** Refers to the XXIV Pan American Games, a strategic milestone for achieving the region's safeguarding goals.

In relation to the **Safe Sport** and safeguarding content we are developing in this manual, you can access the following specific resources:

- **IOC Safeguarding Portal:** olympics.com/ioc/safeguarding
- **Safeguarding e-Learning Course (free, available in Spanish):** olympics.com/safeguarding
- **Athlete365 Platform:** olympic.org/athlete365

> *This Guidance Kit is a living document. It is recommended to review and update it annually as international standards evolve and each NOC's internal situation changes. Panam Sports will publish updated versions on its official platform.*