

***USATF  
VOLUNTEER  
HANDBOOK***



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### ***VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM***

The on-line version of the Volunteer Handbook and Guide can be accessed at

[www.usatf.org/resources/volunteers/contents](http://www.usatf.org/resources/volunteers/contents)

## **CREDITS**

This Handbook, in its initial conception, was written by the Volunteer Council of USA Track & Field  
President Stephanie Hightower • Interim CEO Michael McNees  
Handbook Task Force co-chairs Fred Finke, Sue Humphrey, and Lionel Leach, and secretary/ editor Bill Roe.  
Advisors included General Counsel Norman Wain and Counsel to the Board, Larry James.  
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## WELCOME MESSAGE

To our Volunteers,

First of all, we thank you for your service to our sport and hope your involvement continues for many years!

This handbook is designed to reach out to the thousands of you in the field – whether you have been involved with USA Track & Field for years (or even decades) or are new to our programs – so that all of you in the volunteer sector are operating from a common frame of reference.

There are many reasons for this handbook. Chief among them is to more consistently serve our various constituents – athletes, coaches, officials, event directors, clubs, agents, and others – and to present a more clearly defined "product" to the general public. You are our ambassadors in the field, and we need you to be our "representatives" as you "represent" us!

Other reasons are no less important. They include ever-present risk management issues in this litigious society. The better our "best practices" can become through the counsel and advice of experienced volunteers, the less often we will be confronted with situations leading to a complaint, grievance, or – worst-case – a court date. We need to have everyone be accountable!

You are about to take the first step to being a better informed volunteer by reviewing this information. We hope you will read through the entire packet, although we know if you have been with us for some time, you'll be inclined to give the first few sections a cursory reading. We caution you not to do that – there may only be one or two things you'll learn in those sections, but they could be very important to your effective involvement in USA Track & Field.

At some point before you begin or continue your activities with USA Track & Field, you'll be asked to signify to us that you have read and that you understand the contents of this handbook and/or web pages. If you have any questions about any aspect of the content, you may contact our General Counsel, Norman Wain, at the USA Track & Field National Office. He'll make sure we get you to the comfort level with this material we all desire.

Again, thank you for being with us! Enjoy your experiences!

Sincerely yours,

*President/Board Chair*  
Stephanie Hightower

*Board Vice-Chair*  
Jack Wickens

*Board Secretary*  
Darlene Hickman

*Board Treasurer*  
Kenneth Taylor

*Past President*  
Bill Roe

*Interim CEO*  
Michael McNees

*CFO*  
Gina Miller

*General Counsel*  
Norman Wain

Stephanie Hightower  
President/Board Chair

Michael McNees  
Interim CEO

*National Office*  
132 E. Washington St.,  
Suite 800  
Indianapolis, IN  
46204  
317-261-0500  
[www.usatf.org](http://www.usatf.org)

## Important Phone Numbers/Resources

### National Headquarters Staff

132 E. Washington St., Suite 800  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-3723

Main Switchboard 317-261-0500  
Main Fax 317-261-0514

Website: [www.usatf.org](http://www.usatf.org)

### Staff Directory

Website: <http://www.usatf.org/about/directory/info.asp?parent=&group=National%20Office>

### Contacts by Topic

<b>Membership</b>			Membership@usatf.org
<b>Clubs</b>	Lori Bird	(317-713-4665)	Lori.Bird@usatf.org
<b>Sanctions/Calendar</b>	Carmen Triplet	(317-713-4694)	Carmen.Triplet@usatf.org
<b>Merchandise</b>			Store@usatf.org
<b>Junior Olympics/Youth Athletes</b>	Tricia Floyd	(317-713-4695)	Tricia.Floyd@usatf.org
<b>Elite Athletes</b>	Sariyu "Beka" Suggs	(317-713-4689)	Sariyu.Suggs@usatf.org
<b>Junior Athletes</b>	Duffy Mahoney	(317-713-4673)	Duffy.Mahoney@usatf.org
<b>Coaching Education</b>	Terry Crawford	(317-713-4671)	Terry.Crawford@usatf.org
<b>Officials Certification</b>	Jimmy Stuart		stu28bu@gmail.com
<b>Anti-Doping</b>	Melissa Beasley	(317-713-4650)	Melissa.Beasley@usatf.org
<b>Associations</b>	Andy Martin	(317-713-4675)	Andy.Martin@usatf.org
<b>Communications/Marketing</b>	Jill Geer	(317-713-4654)	Jill.Geer@usatf.org
<b>Events</b>	Jeff Mlynski	(317-713-4679)	Jeff.Mlynski@usatf.org
<b>Legal</b>	Sarah Austin	(317-713-4653)	Sarah.Austin@usatf.org

### Emergency

Website: Emergency Response Plan - <http://www.usatf.org/About/Privacy---Other-Policies/Emergency-Response-Plan.aspx>

### USATF Membership

Website: USATF - Membership Benefits - <http://www.usatf.org/membership/benefits/>

### Code of Ethics

Website: USATF Code of Ethics - <http://www.usatf.org/About/Privacy---Other-Policies/Code-of-Ethics/Code.aspx>

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ORGANIZATION

USA Track & Field, Inc. (USATF) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for track and field, long-distance running, cross country running, and race walking in the United States. USATF encompasses the world's oldest organized sports, the most-watched events of Olympic broadcasts, the #1 high school and junior high school participatory sport, and more than thirty million adult runners in the United States. Led by President Stephanie Hightower and Interim CEO Michael McNees, USATF is a not-for-profit organization with a staff of professional program administrators at the National Office in Indianapolis, IN. Governance is volunteer-driven, just as we are coach- and athlete-centered on performance.

USATF is the United States Olympic Committee (USOC)-designated governing body for our sport in the USA, and represents the USA in the world governing body for the sport, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

### *A sport for everyone ... for life!*

When we say that USATF is a "Sport for Everyone ... For Life," we mean exactly that. Specific examples of how USATF serves the sport can be found at <http://usatf.org/about/>.

Our website is the main resource for general, specific, and historical information on USA Track & Field and its predecessor organizations, the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) and The Athletics Congress/USA (TAC). As well, the web site contains full details on what it means to be a member of and volunteer with USATF, so that you can maximize your involvement with our dynamic and democratic organization!

Important resources and links at [www.usatf.org](http://www.usatf.org) include:

- Competitive opportunities for and rankings of our athletes at <http://usatf.org/About/Links.aspx> (under the Statistics heading);
- Directories of staff, officers, Board members, and committee members at <http://www.usatf.org/about/directory/index.asp>;
- Education programs for coaches and officials at <http://www.usatf.org/Resources-for---.aspx>;
- Annual Meeting information at <http://www.usatf.org/About/Annual-Meeting.aspx> ;
- Bylaws, Operating Regulations at <http://www.usatf.org/About/Bylaws---Operating-Regulations.aspx>;
- Rules of Competition at <http://www.usatf.org/About/Competition-Rules.aspx>;
- Special sections for members-only, including an Association administration "secure" portion of the website, available at <http://www.usatf.org/members-only/>;
- Volunteer service and leadership opportunities in a variety of governance and programmatic areas; and
- History, Hall of Fame, records, statistics, and much, much more located as drop-downs from the main menu headers.

Explore the website once you get there, and learn more about the depth and scope of our sport!

## MISSION STATEMENT AND VISION

### *Mission statement*

USA Track & Field drives competitive excellence and popular engagement in our sport.

### *The vision for the sport*

Our vision means what we will look like if we are successful:

- We fully support our athletes with resources and programs.
- All our constituencies work together to support our sport's success.
- Our business model showcases our sport in innovative and lucrative ways.
- The public and the media respect and are drawn to our sport.
- Our athletes consistently outperform the competition.
- We have the resources to achieve our mission.

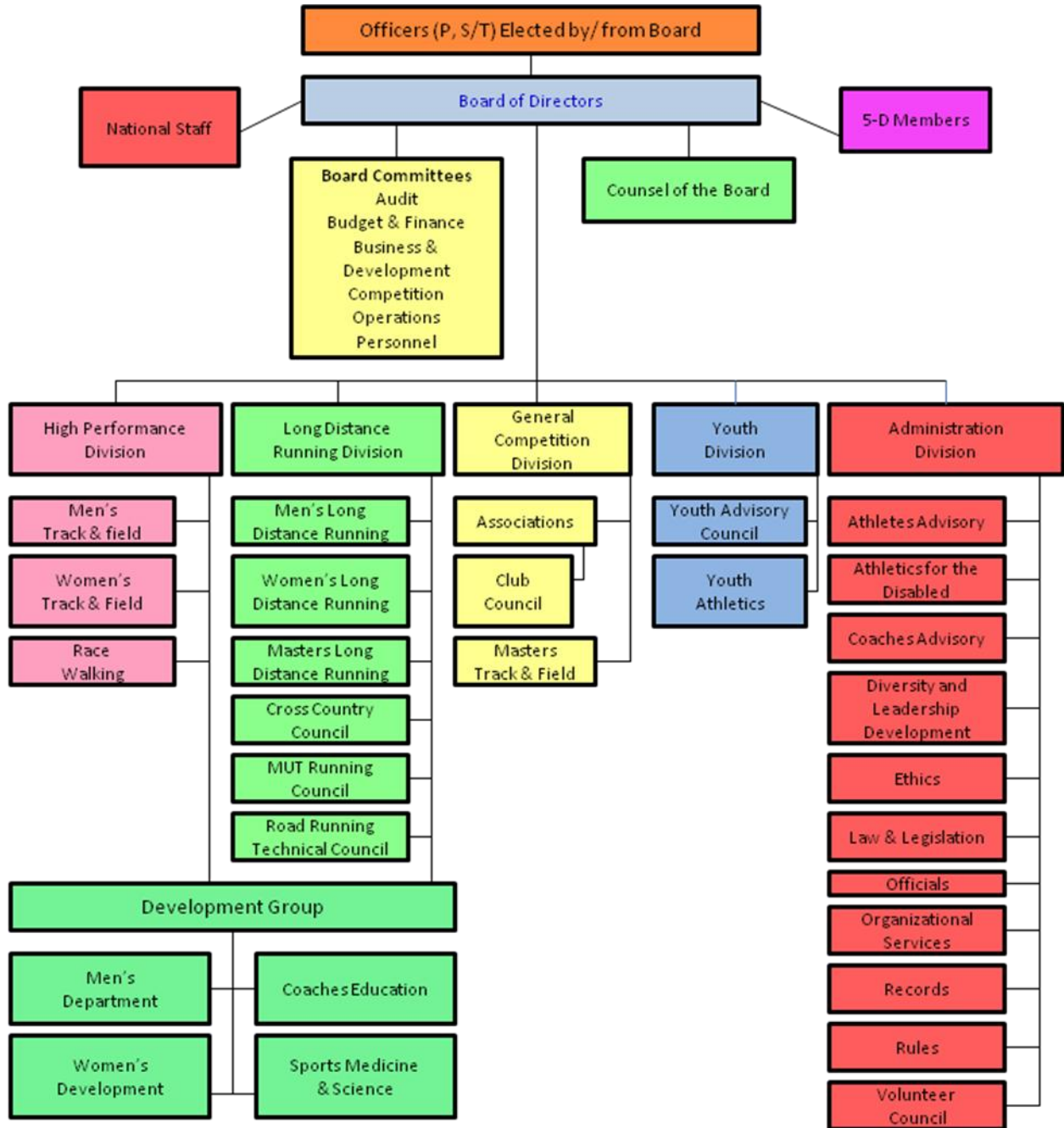
### *The elements of our strategic plan*

- Build a transparent and accountable organizational model that values all constituencies:
  - Management models a new paradigm of ethical, transparent, accountable behavior
  - Describe the new organizational model
  - Communicate regularly with membership
  - Favorable recommendations by Law & Legislation, Associations, and Volunteer Advisory Committees
  - Two-thirds vote of the membership at the Annual Meeting
- Develop a Track & Field “brand” that resonates with consumers:
  - Expand media presence by strategically targeting select platforms
  - Improve and expand our products
  - Determine, develop, and disseminate our message to targeted customers
  - Establish the sport in popular culture
- Develop an aggressive business model that creates and exploits assets we can monetize:
  - Inventory current assets
  - Develop lists of non-traditional opportunities (media, sponsorship, and lifestyle)
  - Retain skills or resources to find these things
  - Develop an event presentation plan that maximizes commercial value
  - Start development of a working model for an organization/athlete relationship
- Develop a culture and systems that maximize competitive excellence and a superior professional experience:
  - Include all relevant constituencies in developing the High Performance Plan
  - Create approaches for identifying and supporting future athletic talent
  - Establish preferred standards and systems for event operations
  - Clearly define and communicate athlete services as high mutual benefit
  - Institutionalize procedures and education to assume a drug-free sport

## USATF ORGANIZATION CHART

USATF has three (3) basic governance documents: the [Bylaws](#), [Operating Regulations](#), and [Rules of Competition](#). The most important document is the [Bylaws](#), which provide the primary framework for the organization. Much of that organizational structure is "fleshed out" in the [Operating Regulations](#), which gets into the details of USATF's day-to-day functions. And – since we are all about programs, which mostly translates into competitions – the guidance for all levels of participation in the sport as a competitor are contained within the [Rules of Competition](#).

The chart below shows the basic structure of the major components of the national governing body.

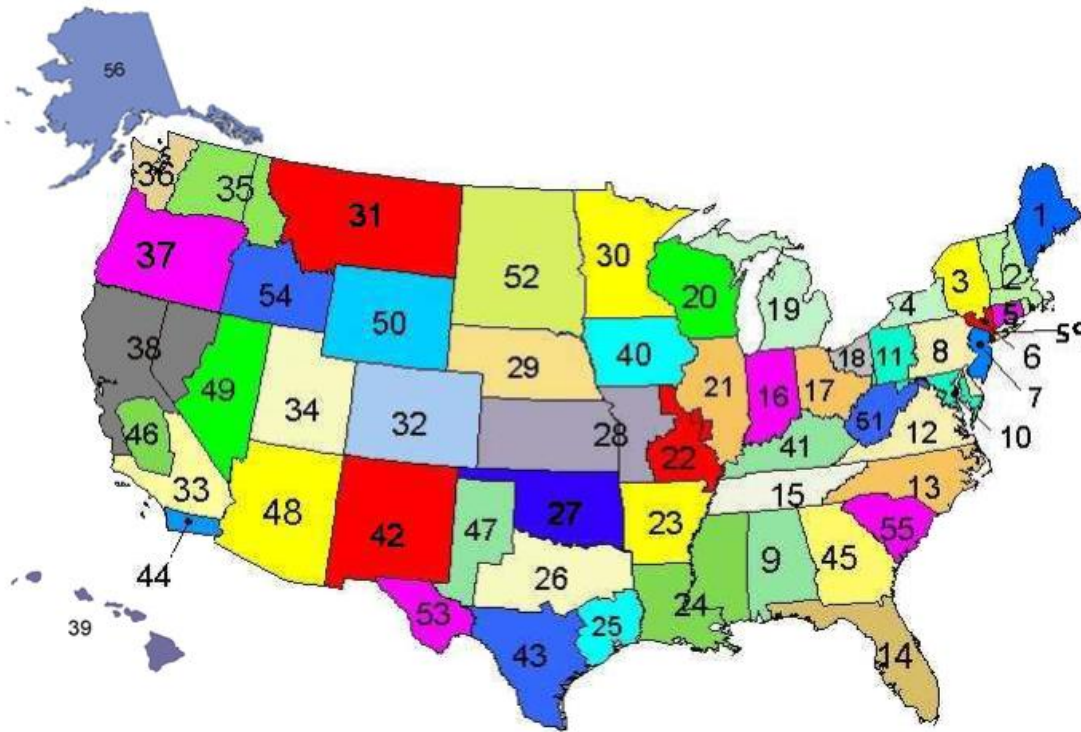


## USATF ASSOCIATIONS

The local governance and programs so important to most of our more than 100,000 members are under the direction of our fifty seven (57) Associations. Each of these Associations are separately incorporated entities, in good corporate standing, that cannot be bound by each other, but meet certain criteria in order to maintain accreditation pursuant to [Regulation 7 of the Operating Regulations](#). Within each local Association are local championships in track & field, cross country running, race walking, road and mountain running, and more. Training and certification of competition officials and hosting of periodic coaching education schools are responsibilities of each Association.

In order to be recognized as a USATF-accredited Association, each Association must have a governing board, officers, and committee chairs responsible for providing a complete calendar of competitive opportunities for all disciplines. Those groups are charged with communicating with members – primarily by having a current and vibrant web site – in an effective manner to make their programs a success.

Information regarding local Associations, including a complete Association locator map and a list of all 57 Associations, can be found at [USA Track & Field - Associations](#).



### *Listing of Associations by number (map key):*

- |                                |                      |                        |                       |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Maine                        | 15 Tennessee         | 30 Minnesota           | 45 Georgia            |
| 2 New England (MA, NH, RI, VT) | 16 Indiana           | 31 Montana             | 46 Central California |
| 3 Adirondack                   | 17 Ohio              | 32 Colorado            | 47 West Texas         |
| 4 Niagara                      | 18 Lake Erie         | 33 Southern California | 48 Arizona            |
| 5 Connecticut                  | 19 Michigan          | 34 Utah                | 49 Nevada             |
| 6 New York                     | 20 Wisconsin         | 35 Inland Northwest    | 50 Wyoming            |
| 7 New Jersey                   | 21 Illinois          | 36 Pacific Northwest   | 51 West Virginia      |
| 8 Mid-Atlantic                 | 22 Ozark             | 37 Oregon              | 52 Dakotas (ND, SD)   |
| 9 Alabama                      | 23 Arkansas          | 38 Pacific             | 53 Border             |
| 10 Potomac Valley              | 24 Southern (LA, MS) | 39 Hawaii              | 54 Snake River        |
| 11 Three Rivers                | 25 Gulf              | 40 Iowa                | 55 South Carolina     |
| 12 Virginia                    | 26 Southwestern      | 41 Kentucky            | 56 Alaska             |
| 13 North Carolina              | 27 Oklahoma          | 42 New Mexico          | 59 Long Island        |
| 14 Florida                     | 28 Missouri Valley   | 43 South Texas         |                       |
|                                | 29 Nebraska          | 44 San Diego-Imperial  |                       |

## COMMITTEE STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

Committee information is also available online at <http://www.usatf.org/About/Committees.aspx>

### **High Performance Division Committees**

#### **Men's Track & Field**

Open and junior (16-19) in-stadium track & field competition for men.

#### **Women's Track & Field**

Open and junior (16-19) in-stadium track & field competition for women.

#### **Race Walking**

All race walking competition for both genders.

### **Joint Development Group Committees**

#### **Coaching Education**

Conduct of all coaching education schools and online presentation.

#### **Men's Development**

Conduct of all Olympic/elite men's development programs, clinics, camps, and projects.

#### **Sports Medicine and Science**

Selection of medical team personnel, study of sport science, assignment of team psychologists, and anti-doping education.

#### **Women's Development**

Conduct of all Olympic /elite women's development programs, clinics, camps, and projects.

### **Long Distance Running Division Committees and Councils**

#### **Men's Long Distance Running**

Out-of-stadium running events and in-stadium track events over 10,000-meters for open and junior (16-19) men.

#### **Women's Long Distance Running**

Out-of-stadium running events and in-stadium track events over 10,000-meters for open and junior (16-19) women.

#### **Masters Long Distance Running**

Out-of-stadium running events and in-stadium track events over 10,000-meters for masters (40+) men.

#### **Cross Country Council**

All junior (16-19), open, and masters (40+) cross country running for men and women.

#### **Mountain/Ultra/Trail Running Council**

All distance over the marathon, as well as events held under mountain and trail running guidelines for men and women.

#### **Road Running Technical Council**

In charge of USATF's road course measurement system.

### **Youth Division Committees and Councils**

#### **Youth Athletics Committee**

Youth nationals and Junior Olympics track & field and cross country for 18-under boys and girls.

#### **Youth Council**

All organizations serving the youth in our sport in a single advisory group.

### **General Competition Division Committees**

#### **Associations**

Association common governance policies and standards, best practices, recognition, workshops, and plans for improvement.

#### **Masters Track & Field**

In-stadium track & held events for men and women 40-plus.

### **Administrative Division Committees**

#### **Athletes Advisory**

Acts as the main athlete sounding body to the Board and organization on behalf of athletes at all levels.

#### **Athletics for the Disabled**

Our link to the paralympic branch of our sport.

#### **Coaches Advisory**

Coaches involved in all levels of coaching – youth, scholastic, and elite.

#### **Diversity & Leadership Development**

Serve as a resource on all matters related to diversity and help identify and assist individuals to assume leadership roles.

#### **Ethics**

Establish, maintain, administer and enforce the Code of Ethics.

#### **Law & Legislation**

Amending and interpreting the [Bylaws](#) and [Operating Regulations](#).

#### **Officials**

Training, certification, and selection of competition officials for major events.

#### **Organizational Services**

Membership of organizations, elections, site selection for the Annual Meeting, credentials, and more.

#### **Records**

Consideration and approval of all records.

#### **Rules**

Amending and interpreting the [Competition Rules](#).

#### **Volunteer Council**

Composed of the leadership from the volunteer sectors an advisory body to the President and Board of Directors.

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## GENERAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

As a key volunteer with USA Track & Field or one of its local Associations, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have helped create memories for thousands of athletes and their families and - in some cases -made their dreams come true. Whether it is the competitions themselves or the other events related to the National Governing Body, each piece represents an opportunity to make a difference, not only to the organization, but to the track & field athletics community as a whole.

### Volunteer Oath

The volunteer oath is the same as the pledge which appears on the back of our membership cards:

*As a member of USA Track & Field (USATF), I am honored and privileged to participate in the sport of track & field, long distance running, cross country running, and/or race walking. I pledge that, as a participant, I will abide by the rules, regulations, and policies of USATF.*

*I understand and agree that my failure to do so in any instance shall constitute grounds for USATF's Chief Executive Officer, acting in the best interest of the sport, to suspend or revoke my USATF membership, including any rights, benefits, privileges, or appointments arising from such membership.*

*By utilization of my USATF number, I agree to abide by this member pledge, and I agree to the terms of the [USATF Privacy Statement](#) available at [USA Track & Field - Home](#).*

### What volunteer opportunities are available to me?

- Competitions
- Coaching, including opportunities and coaches' certification programs.
- Administration
- Schools

### Rights and responsibilities

USATF has more than thirty (30) national committees contributing to our programs and governance that address all aspects of our sport. Each division, committee, and council is headed by a volunteer chair and vice chair who work with a USATF National Office staff liaison.

The chair/leader of every group throughout USA Track & Field has the responsibility to create an environment whereby each volunteer and staff member's participation matters, as follows:

- Clarify the charge as it relates to the mission of USATF.
- Establish a climate of trust and transparency.
- Provide meaningful tasks with specific timelines and outcomes.
- Provide the necessary resources, education, and training.
- Involve constituent groups in the decision-making process.
- Provide ongoing support, feedback, and evaluation.
- Demonstrate appreciation and recognition.

It is the hope that these expectations will make all volunteers within USATF feel like their participation truly matters. Committee chairs and vice chairs will receive training on these points, so that they can apply them to their coordination of their committees and subcommittees.

## GENERAL VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

USATF maintains a position of high visibility in the Olympic family and athletics community. Members and volunteers who provide support, assistance, and services to the programs and events may be seen by the public as representatives of the organization. Members and volunteers are entrusted to represent the organization and should act accordingly.

Volunteers fall into one of two (2) categories: long-term (generally committee, council, or other governance group members) and short-term (generally occasional volunteers at events or in short-term programs). Volunteers can sign up for short-term volunteering according to the program or event criteria. Regardless of the level of volunteer commitment, each volunteer is required to abide by all of the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of USATF.

### **As a long-term or short-term volunteer, you are expected to...**

#### *...fulfill the responsibility of your assignment:*

- Carry out all aspects of your assignment.
- Attend all required meetings or training sessions.
- Know your appropriate USATF supervisor, staff liaison, or volunteer leader.
- Notify your supervisor or volunteer leader if you cannot complete an assignment.
- Perform duties in a safe, competent, and business-like manner.
- Be open and honest regarding intent, goals, and skills.
- Accept only realistic assignments and have a clear understanding of the job expectations.
- Carry out duties promptly and reliably under accepted procedures.

#### *...display a professional and respectful attitude:*

- Be considerate, honest and respectful toward employees of USATF, other volunteers, sponsors, potential sponsors, vendors, and any other person with whom you come in contact with over the course of your actions as a USATF volunteer.
- Treat others fairly and with respect in accordance with all USATF rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Create and maintain an atmosphere free from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and harassment as stated in [USATF Code of Ethics](#).
- Respect confidential information in accordance with all USATF rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Avoid any inappropriate contact or conflicting personal relationships with USATF representatives, including, but not limited to, athletes, staff, employees, and other volunteers that may affect your role as a volunteer.

#### *....maintain a healthy and safe environment:*

- Refrain from using profanity or illegal substances. Volunteers may not consume alcohol prior to or during USATF athletic events while they are volunteering. Volunteers may consume alcohol in moderation at appropriate venues, and are expected to behave in a way that brings credit to USATF and the event. In summary, if you drink, drink responsibly. If you are going to smoke, please do not do so at or during USATF events while you are volunteering.
- Cell phone use should be limited when volunteering at USATF events. Refrain from using video and photographic technology on any cell phone unless such action is part of your volunteer duty.
- Abstain from possession of fireworks, ammunition, firearms, or other weapons or any material considered hazardous or harmful to others while participating in any USATF activity.

#### *...be loyal to their commitment and to our sport:*

- 
- Look for constructive ways to overcome any obstacles.
  - Never use an affiliation with USATF, through volunteering, in connection with the promotion of a political party, religious matter, or other issue not conforming to the position of USATF that may fall within prohibited conduct under the [USATF Code of Ethics](#), Policy on Conflicts of Interest or any other USATF rule, regulation, policy or procedure.
  - Avoid acting in a manner that creates personal, business, or financial conflicts of interest with USATF defined in the [Code of Ethics](#).

***...take advantage of the opportunities our sport offers them:***

- Be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things.
- Become an active participant by extending your involvement to other roles of leadership and training.
- Delight in the change that your involvement makes in the life of someone you know and in the lives of those you never meet.

**In addition to the above guidelines for conduct of all volunteers, short-term volunteers are expected to:**

***...demonstrate commitment and loyalty to their volunteer status:***

- Arrive on time at all scheduled volunteer times.
- Accept the guidance and direction of the USATF Staff, Division Director, volunteer leader and other volunteers.
- Wear the proper attire or uniform while involved with any USATF sanctioned event, including during transit to and from the event, if using public transit.
- Wear volunteer credentials and refrain from copying or reproducing such credentials, as they are non-transferable.
- Refrain from soliciting or selling goods, merchandise, or other property during the operation of the USATF-sanctioned event in accordance with USATF rules, regulations, policies and procedures, unless such action is part of your volunteer duty.
- Respect and use all equipment appropriately and only as required to properly perform your task.
- Never remove any USATF or event-sanctioned property from the event premises unless specifically authorized by USATF staff, your supervisor, or volunteer leader.

***...demonstrate good sportsmanship:***

- Support the decisions of referees, officials, and games committees, and use proper dissent processes.
- Be respectful during ceremonies, and help your athletes do the same.
- Praise all athletes for their efforts, and encourage them to accept the success of other athletes.

***...be continually vigilant and cognizant of the safety of the athlete:***

- Never leave a competition area unsupervised.
- Report anything you observe in the physical environment or a competitive situation which you feel may cause potential infractions or harm to the athletes or other volunteers or participants. Report any suspicious or potentially harmful activities, including but not limited to injuries and bad weather, to your appropriate USATF supervisor, staff liaison, or volunteer leader.

**Sponsor and Contract protocol**

USATF commercially engages certain sponsors in its efforts to grow and cultivate its commercial assets. Volunteers should not have conversations with USATF sponsors regarding USATF's relationship with those sponsors nor should volunteers have conversations that would otherwise interfere with USATF's relationships with those sponsors.

As a volunteer, you are expected to be considerate and respectful toward sponsors or potential sponsors with

whom you come in contact with over the course of your duties. If a problem should arise when dealing with sponsors, questions or concerns should be immediately directed to the Marketing & Communications Department of the USATF National Office.

In addition and in accordance with Article 18 of the USATF Governance Handbook, no volunteer is authorized to sign any contract on behalf of USATF unless otherwise specifically stated in the Governance Handbook.

### **Background screening**

Any volunteer who has access to or direct contact with youth under the age of 18 must undergo and submit a criminal background screening, whether your volunteer involvement is a short-term or long-term position. Information regarding the process is available at [USATF - Criminal Background Check Program](#).

### **Training**

You have been provided with this document in print or through a web link. At the end of this document, there will be a signature page (electronically it will be a checkbox acknowledgement). By signing and submitting the printed copy or clicking the checkbox acknowledgement, you signify that you have read and comprehend the material you have been asked to read, and will comply with the policies and guidelines contained herein.

This is just the first step for many tasks. Additional steps in training will include:

- Pre-service orientation (in addition to this material).
- On-the-job orientation.
- In-service training.
- Volunteer task training (mostly for short-term positions at a competitive and/or participatory event, but – as examples – may include volunteer assistance at an Association office or expo booth).

### **Rewards and Member benefits**

Along with the intrinsic reward of a job well done in service to the sport, there may be additional "perks" for those who rise to the top of the volunteer structure or become active within USATF, including:

- Stipends (for select positions only).
- Transportation and meals, if applicable and consistent with established USATF rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Something to do on your holidays!
- Nominating individuals for election to various positions at the local and national levels, if applicable.
- Receiving periodic electronic newsletters and press releases.

Other USATF member benefits can be found at [USATF - Membership Benefits](#).

### **Disabled volunteer accommodations**

USATF embraces the participation of volunteers with disabilities. This goes beyond supporting athletics events for the disabled as part of our programs. We are always open to ways we can be more inclusive in all capacities, and how we can provide access and accommodations to create equal-access opportunities. Please contact the USATF Legal Department at (317) 713-4653 should you need assistance in obtaining such access and accommodations.

### **Emergency Response Plan and medical policies**

Safety is the top priority for all USATF events. A published "[Emergency Response Plan](#)" is available and should be reviewed annually at all committee meetings. At the Annual Meeting held in the late fall each year, an overview of the [Emergency Response Plan](#) will be given along with a possible presentation by the Chief Communications Officer.

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A key component to the Emergency Response Plan is who can and should deal with the media in crisis situations. The CEO and the President are the only personnel authorized to speak with the media, and all inquiries should be directed to the Chief Communications Officer.

### **Performance problems**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties satisfactorily and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times, consistent with all USATF rules, regulations, policies and procedures. Occasionally, volunteers have difficulty meeting their obligations or following the guidelines for conduct. USATF will deal with these situations on an individual basis, according to its view of the circumstances involved.

Typically, disciplinary action may include one or more of the following - oral warning, written warning, disciplinary action, loss of funding, suspension, or termination of the volunteer relationship - depending on the circumstances. USATF may use progressive discipline when dealing with behavior and discipline issues, but it reserves the right and sole discretion to deviate from progressive discipline, bypass one or more steps, and even start with termination. USATF, consistent with its established rules, regulations, policies and procedures also has the right to discipline volunteers for behavior not explicitly laid out in the guidelines for conduct.

The volunteer relationship with USATF is based on mutual consent and both the volunteer and USATF have the right to terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause or advance notice. While USATF may, in its sole discretion, choose to use progressive discipline, nothing in this policy or elsewhere alters the at-will relationship or requires USATF to use progressive discipline.

#### ***How should a volunteer report inappropriate behavior?***

If a volunteer feels that he or she is being subjected to harassment, sexual harassment, or offensive behavior, he or she has the right to demand that the person stop immediately. This conduct should be immediately reported following the process laid out in the [USATF Code of Ethics](#) for ethics complaints.

### **Volunteer protection (whistleblower) policy**

USATF's whistleblower policy and reporting procedures can be found online at [USA Track & Field - Home](#).

## VOLUNTEER / STAFF WORKING RELATIONSHIP

USATF is a large, complex, national, volunteer-driven organization of:

- National volunteer leadership, including the Board of Directors, Annual Meeting delegates, past presidents, presidential appointees, committee and council members, athlete representatives, and Association officers, to name a few.
- National staff in multiple locations.
- Zone, region, and Association volunteer leadership.
- Local staff in some Associations.
- Dozens of volunteer committee chairs, hundreds of committee members, thousands of certified competition officials and coaches who have completed education schools, and volunteers at all levels of the federation.

While job functions may differ, there is one consistency throughout the organization: volunteers and staff working together for a common goal. In order to be successful, it is necessary to both clarify roles and follow a comprehensive communication plan. In addition, each individual must commit to being "pro-active" in seeking out and sharing information. With good teamwork and candid, timely, two-way communication, USATF will be able to reach its goals and objectives, and achieve its mission to drive competitive excellence and popular engagement in our sport.

With the USATF [Strategic Plan](#) requiring staff time and expertise, the USATF Board also recognizes the vast knowledge, experience and presence of the volunteer corps. Accordingly, the Board is committed to ensuring the organization's volunteer direction and policy-making processes, and empowering its professional staff to manage day-to-day operation. Mutual respect for the contribution of volunteers and staff is the key to creating good teamwork. It must be evident in all forms of communication.

The USATF Volunteer /Staff Communications Plan is based on the following principles:

- Fostering positive, respectful, and effective volunteer and staff teamwork is essential to the success of USATF's mission.
- Respectful differences of opinion and alternative perspectives on issues are welcome, and promote healthy growth in the sport.
- Policy recommendations come to the Board from committees, staff, and Associations.
- The Board of Directors establishes policy and direction.
- Volunteers and Staff will make efforts to solicit the other's perspective on important issues.
- Volunteers supply input and support to staff, monitor activities, and assist in program implementation when that is part of their charge.
- Staff manages daily operation, provides updated information/reporting, and supports volunteers as charged.
- Effective communication is two-way, pro-active and timely.

The primary role of the USATF volunteer leadership is to conduct USATF's operations consistent with all USATF rules, regulations, policies and procedures. A partial list of *volunteer responsibilities* includes:

- Develop, plan, and implement key activities and actions in concert with the staff to achieve the mission and goals as set forth by the Board of Directors.
- Advise staff on effective delivery and time-sensitive reporting systems that service the network and effectively communicate with the USATF Board of Directors, Division chairs, committee chairs, and Association leadership.
- Advise staff on relevant USATF budget submissions under the direction of the Treasurer and Board.
- Consider committee charges with the committee chair, committee members, and the Division chair.

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- Clearly define, with the staff counterpart, the role each will play in the implementation of programs and activities, and establish an agreed-upon communications plan with the staff counterpart(s).
  - Monitor the staff on committee work.
  - Work together with staff in the spirit of cooperation and teamwork.

The primary role of the USATF National Office staff is to conduct operations consistent with USATF policies. A partial list of *staff responsibilities* can be found in Regulation 10 of the [Operating Regulations](#) and includes:

- Develop, plan, and implement key activities and actions in concert with the volunteers to achieve the mission and goals as set forth by the Board of Directors.
- Create and maintain effective delivery and time-sensitive reporting systems that service the network and effectively communicate with the USATF Board of Directors, Division chairs, committee chairs, and Association leadership.
- Prepare USATF budget submissions under the direction of the Treasurer and Board.
- Adhere to and manage the budget.
- Recommend and refine committee charges with the committee chair, committee members, and the Division chair.
- Clearly define, with the volunteer counterpart, the role each will play in the implementation of programs and activities, and establish an agreed-upon communications plan with the volunteer counterpart(s).
- Develop committee budgets in conjunction with the Division chair, committee chair, and committee members involved in the budget process.
- Assist the committee chair with committee work.
- Attend Division and committee meetings, as assigned.
- Work together with volunteers and staff in the spirit of cooperation and teamwork.
- Support volunteers as charged.

Furthermore, it is important that the actions of the USATF National Office staff, the USATF Board of Directors, and all of the USATF volunteers work cohesively together to accomplish the goals outlined in USATF's [Strategic Plan](#). In accordance with that objective, each USATF volunteer committee shall, on an annual basis and in collaboration with their USATF National Office staff liaison, determine its top objectives (which align with USATF's [Strategic Plan](#)) and identify the budget implications and the metrics that will be measured to confirm success of these objectives. USATF volunteer committees shall then provide an analysis of how these top objectives were met in its annual committee report provided to USATF at the Annual Meeting.

In summary, while the USATF Board of Directors makes policy and sets direction, input from committees, Associations, and staff should be part of the process. While staff are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations, up-front input and support - as well as feedback - from volunteer counterparts have great value. While volunteer committees recommend policy to the Board, and supply input and feedback to the staff, direction from the Board and dialog with staff adds perspective.

It is the individual surrounded by a strong team that is crucial to success of the USATF mission: "USA Track & Field drives competitive excellence and popular engagement in our sport." Through common sense, effective communication, and teamwork, we will fulfill the organization's goals and dreams.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

As ambassadors of the organization, you may be asked questions regarding some of the organization's policies specific to our governance, events, rules, regulations, policies or procedures. Policies and procedures are reviewed annually to ensure that the utmost consideration is given to safety of the participants, coaches, officials, administrators, fans/ spectators, and other volunteers.

The following FAQ's should help you understand some of those policies:

### **Q: Where does USATF's authority come from?**

A: There are three (3) ways USATF is empowered to act as the National Governing Body for our sport:

- The Amateur Sports Act of 1978 and its successor, the Ted Stevens Amateur and Olympic Sports Act of 1998.
- The USOC-designated national governing body.
- The IAAF member for the USA.

### **Q: Is governance of the sport USATF's only role?**

A: No, the organization has many facets:

- Development at all levels, including research and dissemination of technical information.
- Managing, promoting, scheduling, and sanctioning events.
- Fielding Team USA squads and managing international travel.
- Marketing the brand of USATF and the sport in general.
- Promoting diversity of representation at all levels of participation and governance, including women in sport and athletics for the disabled.
- Coordination of certification and education of coaches and officials.

### **Q: Why did the name of the organization change back in 1992?**

A: The name The Athletics Congress was not understood by the majority of Americans, who tend to think that "athletics" references all sports within an "athletics department." After considering several choices, including one which would have some reference to road running and race walking, it was decided to go with the simpler "USA Track & Field" since that would be understood by most Americans to include all disciplines within the sport.

### **Q: Who decides the rules and regulations?**

A: The organization has two (2) key committees:

- The Law & Legislation Committee deals with governance legislation affecting the [Bylaws and Operating Regulations](#), amendments, and interpretation (where requested).
- The Rules Committee deals with the amending and interpreting of the [Competition Rules](#) used at meets ranging from national championships to local championships to meets of any kind.

### **Q: For which liabilities are volunteers covered by USATF's insurance?**

A: Volunteers are insured and covered for liability claims arising out of their acts or omissions while acting under the direction of an insured club, USATF association, or the organizer/event director and within the scope of his/her assigned volunteer duties in connection with a USATF sanctioned event. Covered volunteers are insured if someone sues them for negligence that causes personal injury or property damage to a third party. Please remember, USATF expects volunteers to conduct volunteer programs in a way that minimizes risk or potential liability to the organization.

### **Q: What is the difference between performing work and volunteering?**

A: Wage and Hour Compliance - Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), all non-exempt employees

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must receive minimum wage for every hour worked and time and a half for every hour over 40 worked in a week. There is an exception to this rule for individuals who volunteer or donate their services, usually on a part-time basis, for the charitable, educational and/or public service objectives of non-profit organizations such as USATF. The exception is applicable as long as:

- The individual performs the services without the promise or expectation of compensation. A volunteer may receive reasonable benefits, a nominal fee, or reimbursement of expenses to perform the services for which he/she volunteered. However, foreign nationals on non-immigrant visas may only accept reimbursement for actual expenses and may NOT be paid reasonable benefits or a nominal fee (as this may be considered performing services or labor for remuneration and would be considered employment); and
- If already employed by USATF in a non-exempt position, the volunteer services are not the same type of services which the individual is employed to perform for USATF. [Foreign nationals on non-immigrant visas are not allowed to 'temporarily' volunteer in the position for which they were employed by USATF.]**Q: Are volunteers eligible for any compensation?**

A: A volunteer is an individual who performs a service of her/his own free will without any remuneration. A department may offer to reimburse volunteers for certain expenses such as parking, travel, or reward the volunteers with an appreciation event. Volunteers are considered to be freely assisting with a project or service as a personal choice and do not receive any other monetary compensation. Volunteers who are reimbursed for items of value may be subject to individual 1099 tax reporting.

NOTE: Foreign nationals on non-immigrant visas may only accept reimbursement for actual expenses and may NOT be paid reasonable benefits or a nominal fee.

**Q: Whom should I call for questions I have about volunteering?**

A: This document was not intended to answer specific questions. For these, call the [Office of the General Counsel](#). The General Counsel will answer your question or direct you to the appropriate office able to answer your question.

## **INSURANCE AND VOLUNTEER LIABILITY WAIVER**

### **INSURANCE COVERAGE**

Participant Accident insurance is one of the primary benefits of being a USATF member, particularly if you are a certified competition official. The participant accident coverage provides registered volunteers and officials with accident medical coverage when participating in a USATF Sanctioned Event. The coverage is secondary to any other primary insurance you might have. The deductible is \$200 and the maximum limit of coverage is \$10,000.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Volunteers are to be reminded that USATF does not provide insurance coverage for personal vehicles. Volunteers who will be driving their own personal vehicles are to be advised that they are responsible for providing their own insurance.

All USATF sanctioned activities have one or more elements which require volunteers. Each volunteer will - at some point in the process of becoming a volunteer - be asked to read and sign an acknowledgment that they have read and understand the required volunteer information, volunteer waiver, organizational background, and current policies and guidelines.

The original signed waiver form is to be kept on file by the originating department for a minimum of five (5) years for insurance purposes. A copy can be provided to the volunteer if they so request. In the event of an accident, the USATF General Counsel will then request this form from the appropriate supervising department.

### **TYPICAL INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Thank you for volunteering with USA Track & Field. USATF recognizes that your volunteer contribution enhances the organization's programs and activities, and wants to ensure that your volunteer experience is safe and rewarding.

As a registered volunteer, you are included as a "named insured" on USATF's general liability insurance policy. This means that - while properly carrying out your volunteer responsibilities - you are covered for third party liability claims as a result of your actions during a sanctioned and approved USATF event.

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## **RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES FOR USATF AND ITS VOLUNTEERS**

### **Adherence to governance principles**

When a volunteer takes it upon himself or herself to make a unilateral decision which runs contrary to the approved rules, regulations, policies and procedures of USATF, it puts both the volunteer and USATF in jeopardy. Disregard for conflicts of interest, enabling fraudulent activities surrounding meetings or elections, and supporting candidates from a position which is supposed to be impartial are examples of misuse of power. *These examples create the potential for liability for USATF and the individual(s) involved..*

### **Adherence to rules of competition**

Likewise, when a volunteer takes it upon himself or herself to make a unilateral decision which runs contrary to the approved competition rules of USATF, it puts the volunteer, the event, and USATF in potential jeopardy and harms the integrity of the sport in the eyes of the public. While the courts generally do not support lawsuits resulting from "field of play" issues, none of us wants a "black eye" in the court of public opinion. *You can be barred from future participation in a volunteer capacity at any USATF by committing or permitting such situations to arise.*

### **Respecting the roles of staff and other volunteers**

There are lines of authority and areas of responsibility set forth in multiple documents, contracts, and governance. Lines are clearly drawn between those areas which fall under the purview of volunteers and those which are the purposes for which we have hired staff. *We have a clear method for resolution of issues between staff and volunteers in our [Bylaws](#) – please use it!*

### **Volunteer Risk Management**

In order to manage the risks and liabilities inherent in volunteer activities, all USATF events and programs are required to follow these guidelines:

- All volunteers must be registered by means of a written agreement, which clarifies their duties, reporting relationship(s), and duration of their volunteer service. This form shall also provide the volunteer information about liability and insurance matters.
- Events and programs registering volunteers are responsible for ensuring that the volunteer receives adequate training, including safety training where appropriate, for carrying out their duties.
- Volunteers should be at least eighteen (18) years of age or should be part of a team of teens under the direction of one or more adult leaders. In exceptional circumstances involving low-risk activities, volunteers may be under the age of eighteen (18), but this must be arranged in advance with the USATF Legal Department.
- If volunteers are involved in a situation which may give rise to liability (i.e., they are injured, their property is damaged, or they are involved in a situation involving injury or damage to a third party), the incident must be reported immediately to the USATF Legal Department.
- Volunteers shall at all times be named as "additional insured" on relevant insurance policies, which USATF carries.

***To register as a volunteer, please complete the attached volunteer forms.***

**USA TRACK & FIELD  
VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM**

**NOTE:** This form is also available in an on-line process as part of USATF membership. In order to serve in a volunteer capacity with USATF at the national or international level, members must signify that they have reviewed the information contained herein and/or in the on-line version.

NAME	
ADDRESS	
CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE	
CELLULAR OR DAY-TIME TELEPHONE	
PREFERRED E-MAIL ADDRESS	
CURRENT USATF MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
ASSOCIATION	

By my signature below, I signify that I have reviewed or have sufficient knowledge of the governance and structure of USA Track & Field (Part I of the Review Process) and have read and acknowledge the guidelines and protocols contained in volunteer information (Part II of the Review Process). I will abide by the guidelines and policies.

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Signature

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Date

**PLEASE FOLD AND TAPE THIS SHEET CLOSED, AFFIX POSTAGE,  
AND SEND TO USA TRACK & FIELD TO COMPLETE YOUR REGISTRATION,**

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**USA TRACK & FIELD  
Volunteer Registration  
132 East Washington Street, Suite 800  
Indianapolis, IN 46204**

## USATF VOLUNTEER MANUAL CONTENTS ON-LINE

Welcome to the on-line USATF Volunteer Manual, your chance to put together the pieces of "the big picture" of USATF. There's a lot to know, and much of it is contained in the various sections of this online USATF Volunteer Manual. The components can be viewed in order or as you need them. To return to this page, click your browser's "back" button or follow the links where provided at the bottom of each section. In order to meet the USATF volunteer training requirement, you should review those items in Part I, and must signify that you have reviewed and understand the items in Part II.

### **PART I - BASIC INFORMATION**

#### **USATF basics...**

[History of USATF](#) gives an overview of how we got to where we are. The [USATF Bylaws and Operating Regulations](#) provide the necessary reference material and details of governance for the organization.

#### **Where did all these people come from?**

Orient yourself in the geographic sense and tell the difference between USATF Mid-Atlantic and USATF Southern with the [map of USATF Associations](#). It helps distinguish which states are in USATF New England, which five Associations are in the state of Texas, and which portions of three states make up USATF Potomac Valley, not to mention what is USATF Missouri Valley.

#### **What are we here for?**

"USA Track & Field drives competitive excellence and popular engagement in our sport." This is the guiding principle for all activities of the USA Track & Field. Learn more about it at [Mission Statement and Values](#).

#### **Direction is important...**

Our direction comes from the [USATF Strategic Plan](#). This document articulates the vision and the mission of USATF, as well as our core values, goals and strategic priorities.

#### **How is this place organized?**

Check out the USATF Board, division, and committee structure, indicating which volunteer committees fall under what divisions, at the [USATF Organization Chart](#). You have to see it to understand it.

#### **We all need structure in our lives.**

Get a clear, concise and essential overview of our organization at [USATF Structure](#). Geography, voting, and leadership - it's all there.

#### **Who's who? (You are not alone...)**

The [USATF national committee listing](#) is a valuable resource for seeing what USATF seeks to do, and how much it accomplishes.

#### **What, when, and where?**

Consult the [USATF calendar](#) for one-stop event shopping.

#### **Who do I talk to about...?**

See who can help you at our [Staff Directory](#).

#### **Greet, eat, bond, and meet.**

The [USATF Annual Meeting](#) is our yearly gathering to report on committee work, vote on changes to the USATF Bylaws, Operating Rules, and Rules of Competition, and salute the year's best efforts on the track or roads and trails or in the field. The USATF Associations Workshop, held annually, is a second opportunity for key volunteers in local governing bodies to meet and discuss issues, and learn about best practices.

#### **How many awards?**

Click on [USATF Awards](#) to learn about the annual USATF awards that encourage excellence and honor the achievements of individuals and organizations.

### **PART II - SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER INFORMATION**

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### **Between the lines...**

Who does what and how do they tell each other about it? Check out [Roles and Relationships of Staff and Volunteers](#) which provides descriptions of the roles of each and guidelines for effective communications.

### **All things legal...**

For the record, familiarize yourself with the [USATF Code of Ethics](#) and Conflict of Interest information.

### **Reality check...**

Are you the most well informed volunteer ever? Find out at the [checklist for new volunteers](#).

### **What's expected?**

Browse through [Seven Expectations](#) of USATF leaders. While this is designed for volunteer leadership, it's beneficial for everyone. Whether or not you aspire to be a committee chair, you are a leader and these are our leadership marching orders.

### **How can I participate?**

Visit [Volunteer Opportunities](#) for a list and description of USATF national committees as well as opportunities for volunteering at USATF events.

### **Can't we all just get along?**

[Managing conflict](#) doesn't have to be painful if everyone seeks a win-win solution.

### **Financial matters.**

Consult [reimbursement policies](#) as well as your Division and committee chairs for this important information.

### **Is there more?**

Yes. Visit [Reference Materials /Links](#) to peruse additional resources and find more in-depth information on volunteer issues and concerns.

### **Can we be more inclusive?**

Read about the USATF's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and multicultural participation efforts at [Diversity](#).

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Do you have a suggestion of content to include in a future edition of the USATF Volunteer Handbook? E-mail editor [Bill Roe](#) or call 360.739.2105 with your input, or contact the Office of the General Counsel at USA Track & Field at 317-261-0500. If it would help you as a new USATF volunteer, chances are it would help someone else.