

**U.S. FIGURE SKATING COACHES
COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR VIRTUAL LESSONS**

**VIRTUAL COACHING
RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR CLUBS,
COACHES,
PROGRAMS
AND RINKS**



This document is intended to be used as a guide for clubs, programs, and rink management. Clubs, programs, and rink management may edit, implement and enforce this document as they see fit.

OVERVIEW

Virtual coaching can offer meaningful benefits to skaters, coaches, and skating programs when conducted under appropriate conditions and oversight. Due to the diversity of rink and club operational models for private instruction, there is not a universal policy related to virtual coaching. However, there are several key considerations to promote the responsible, safe, and equitable implementation of virtual coaching.

Key Areas of Focus:

- Skater Safety, SkateSafe® & SafeSport Compliance
- Session Safety for All Participants
- Coach Responsibilities & Program Contribution
- Workplace Fairness & Revenue Integrity

While not required, a club, program, or rink can establish policies around these focus areas can help to maintain the integrity and sustainability of virtual instruction within a facility's broader programming. **All virtual lessons should receive prior approval from the club, program, or rink management.**

PURPOSE

This document provides a framework for clubs, programs, and rink management to regulate virtual coaching conducted during on-ice sessions. Its goal is to support safe, fair, and professional use of remote instruction while upholding skater welfare, operational safety, and workplace standards.

It is recommended that clubs, programs, and rink management create, communicate, and enforce their own policies related to virtual lessons. All virtual coaches, skaters, and parents/guardians should read and sign an acknowledgment form prior to engaging in virtual lessons.

I. SAFETY POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ON-ICE TRAFFIC FLOW

- The club, program, or rink management determines where skaters may receive virtual instruction (e.g., at the boards, in the hockey box, or off-ice).
- Virtual coaches should require skaters to remain near the boards and outside of traffic zones when stopping to receive feedback.
- Skaters should place a brightly colored 12x18 card stock sheet behind their device to signal an active virtual lesson.
- Virtual instruction should not be permitted on crowded or high-traffic sessions unless specifically authorized.

2. ATHLETE SAFETY & COACH ELIGIBILITY

• For Skaters Under Age 18:

- In accordance with U.S. Figure Skating SkateSafe® policies, all electronic communication, including virtual lessons, must be Open and Transparent by including the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant (i.e., an Adult Athlete or Coach) in the virtual lesson. The coach should initiate the call on the platform where the virtual lesson will take place.
- Permission from the parent/guardian of a Minor Athlete must be obtained prior to a virtual lesson taking place.

• Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Review U.S. Figure Skating SkateSafe® Handbook and the [U.S. Figure Skating Parent and Guardian Guide to Athlete Safety](#)

VIRTUAL COACHING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLUBS, COACHES, PROGRAMS AND RINKS



- o Coordinate lesson times and compensation with the virtual coach.
- o Supply and manage technology used for virtual lessons.
- o Inform rink monitors in advance of scheduled virtual lessons.
- o Be responsible for any rink/club coaching fees.
- o Ensure compliance with U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe® policies, including its Electronic Communications Policy if their athlete is under the age of 18.

- **Coach Requirements:**

- o The coach must adhere to all applicable U.S. Figure Skating and Learn to Skate USA® compliance requirements.
- o The club, program, or rink should request, and maintain a record of, a copy of the coach's U.S. Figure Skating membership card and insurance certificate.
- o Coaches may be required to sign a Facility Use Agreement or Guest Coach Agreement, as well as any applicable club, program, or rink specific code of conduct.
- o A virtual lesson should be considered a private lesson and held to the same eligibility and documentation standards as in-person instruction.
- o Ensure compliance with U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe® policies, including its Electronic Communications Policy if the athlete is under the age of 18.

- **Lesson Payment:**

- o Any applicable lesson fees should be arranged in advance between the skater/parent and the coach.

3. AUDIO DEVICES

- Skaters should wear only one earbud during virtual lessons. Use of two earbuds should be prohibited. Skaters should clear with facility/club for permission to wear one earbud during virtual lessons.
- Headphones and headband-style speakers should not be allowed. Clip-on Bluetooth speakers may be used with prior club, program, or rink approval.
- The club, program, or rink should determine where devices may be placed on the boards for virtual lessons.
- Audio permissions should be session-dependent and based on session density, skater level, and overall safety and at are the discretion of the club, program, or rink.

II. WORKPLACE CONSIDERATIONS

1. COMMISSION & FAIR COMPENSATION

- All virtual lessons should be approved by the club, program, and/or rink management at least 48 hours in advance.
- Coaches conducting virtual lessons should be subject to the same facility usage fee/commission/pro fee structure as in-person coaches to maintain fairness and revenue consistency.
- All facility usage fees/commissions/pro fees should be cleared with the facility/club/rink management in advance of the lesson.

2. STAFFING & SESSION MANAGEMENT

- Virtual coaching should not reduce the availability of in-person coaches required to meet skater demand or group lesson staffing.
- The club, program, or rink should reserve the right to limit or deny virtual instruction based on staffing needs or program impact.
- Coaches and skaters may be required to modify lesson plans depending on the number and level of skaters on the ice.



3. PROGRAM CONTRIBUTION

- Coaches affiliated with the rink/club and offering virtual lessons to external skaters should be expected to contribute proportionally to group class lessons and club programming.
- Exceptions should be pre-approved by rink management or club leadership.

III. LOGISTICS & ENFORCEMENT

1. ZOOM MONITORING

- Coaches should clearly identify themselves and make it visible to who is participating in the lesson.
- Clubs, programs, and rinks should reserve the right to audit virtual lessons to ensure compliance with their requirements or policies.

2. AUDIO COMPLIANCE

- Implementation and enforcement of any earbud/speaker policy is the responsibility of club, program, or rink, not fellow coaches.
- Any violations of a club, program, or rink's audio or device policy may result in written warnings or loss of virtual lesson privileges, as determined by the club, program, or rink.

3. COMMISSION TRACKING

- All virtual lessons should be accurately logged and submitted for commission processing.
- Failure to report virtual lessons as required by the club, program, or rink may result in disciplinary action as outlined by the applicable club, program, or rink policy.

IV. REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION

- These recommendations are subject to regular review and updates as technologies and coaching practices evolve.
- Club, program, and rink leadership retains full discretion to approve, deny, or revoke virtual coaching privileges based on safety, operational capacity, and programmatic needs.