



USA Deaf Sports Federation
www.usdeafsports.org

**USADSF Statement on the
“We Are Together. Sports” Games in Russia**
May 30, 2023

USA Deaf Sports Federation (USADSF) is aware of an event currently being promoted called the “We Are Together. Sports” taking place in Ufa, Russia, from July 23-August 2, 2023. USADSF has learned that certain individuals have reached out to American athletes and National Sport Organizations affiliated with the USADSF to inquire about their participation.

The USADSF Executive Board wishes to make it abundantly clear that **USADSF will not participate in this event under any circumstances.** With the current war in Ukraine, the United States Department of State has placed a [Level-4 “DO NOT TRAVEL” advisory](#) on Russia due to:

“the unpredictable consequences of the **unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian military forces**, the potential for **harassment and the singling out of U.S. citizens for detention by Russian government security officials**, the **arbitrary enforcement of local law, limited flights into and out of Russia**, the **Embassy’s limited ability to assist U.S. citizens in Russia**, and the possibility of **terrorism**. U.S. citizens residing or travelling in Russia should **depart immediately**. Exercise increased caution due to the risk of **wrongful detentions.**” (Emphasis from U.S. Department of State).

Therefore, the USADSF Executive Board has determined that it would be **reckless, irresponsible, and dangerous** for any of our athletes or representatives to travel to Russia at this time. Through an emergency vote, the USADSF Board has agreed to the following in accordance with USADSF Bylaws 2.1 and 8.4.3:

- Any National Sport Organization, National Sport Committee, or individual found to facilitate the participation of USA athletes in this competition will be deemed to foster an **unsafe environment** for our athletes and will be indefinitely suspended from future activities under USADSF’s purview, including Deaflympics and World Deaf Championships.
- Any American athlete participating in “We Are Together. Sports” and representing the United States will face disciplinary action, including, but not limited to suspension. USADSF will not be responsible for any athlete that travels to Russia to participate in this competition; said athletes would be assuming risks entirely on their own.

Individuals should report any attempt by a representative, liaison, or intermediary to solicit the participation of American athletes in the abovementioned event to USADSF at info@usdeafsports.org.

USADSF believes that Deaf and Hard of Hearing American athletes deserve every opportunity to compete in an environment that is safe and fair. We look forward to continuing our work at the upcoming World Deaf Youth Games, 20th Winter Deaflympics, and the 25th Summer Deaflympics, as well as a number of World Deaf Championships.

USADSF is the highest governing body of deaf sports in the United States and a member of the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD). ICSD is recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as an International Federation with Olympic Standing and is the Governing body of Summer and Winter Deaflympics. For more information, please visit our website at www.usdeafsports.org or e-mail us at info@usdeafsports.org.